MUSIC IS MY FAITH

David Mannes

MUSIC IS MY FAITH

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY

David Mannes

New York · W · W · NORTON & CO · INC · *Publishers*

To LEOPOLD and MARYA
for whom this book
was written

CONTENTS

PREFACE BY MARYA MANNES		15
1.	THE PEOPLE I COME FROM	21
2.	BOYHOOD IN THE TENDERLOIN	25
3.	LITTLE DAVID, PLAY ON YOUR FIDDLE	32
4.	JOHN DOUGLAS, NEGRO	37
5.	UNION SQUARE THEATRE—AND ACTOR-WORSHIP	41
6.	I PLAY IN HONKY-TONKS	46
7.	THE M. M. P. U.—1883	50
8.	ROAD WORK	55
9.	STAGE-STRUCK AND ART-STRUCK	58
10.	SETBACKS—AND COMPENSATIONS	62
11.	KOSTER AND BIAL'S	66
12.	RICHARD MANSFIELD: ANTON SEIDL: AND MY FIRST RECITAL	71
13.	EUROPE—AND FIASCO	79
14.	A FEW STEPS AHEAD	86
15.	ENTER WALTER DAMROSCH	93
16.	I STUDY WITH HALIR	96
17.	THE NEW YORK SYMPHONY	99
18.	YOUNG PADEREWSKI: ORCHESTRA TOURS	102
19.	I MOVE UP: HEAR YSAYE: AND SEE A CERTAIN ALTO'S FACE	105

20.	ADVENTURE IN CANADA	112
21.	MY FIRST STRIKE	117
22.	ENTER CLARA DAMROSCH	120
23.	THE BIRTH OF THE SETTLEMENT	124
24.	THE DAMROSCH DYNASTY	128
25.	ROMANTIC PURSUIT	133
26.	HALIR AGAIN: AND MARIENBAD	137
27.	I PROPOSE	141
28.	I MARRY	144
29.	I WORRY	149
30.	WAGNER OPERAS TOUR AMERICA	156
31.	THE SETTLEMENT GROWS	165
32.	EAST THIRD STREET	170
33.	A SON IS BORN	173
34.	FRITZ KREISLER: THE KNEISEL QUARTET: WEINGARTNER	175
35.	SUMMER ON MECOX BAY: DEATH OF A QUARTET: THE SYMPHONY CLUB	179
36.	HUSBAND AND WIFE—VIOLIN AND PIANO	184
37.	THE FEDERATION OF MUSIC SCHOOL SETTLEMENTS IS BORN	187
38.	HUMAN DOCUMENT	192
39.	SONATA RECITALS—DAVID AND CLARA MANNES	196
40.	GUSTAV MAHLER: ISADORA DUNCAN	203
41.	I RESIGN FROM THE SYMPHONY	206
42.	HAMPTON INSTITUTE: MY COLORED FRIENDS	210

43.	MUSIC IN HARLEM	213
44.	BIG JIM EUROPE	217
45.	MUSIC AT SING SING	221
46.	THE SETTLEMENT THRIVES: THEODORE ROOSEVELT	225
47.	SONATAS IN LONDON: I RESIGN FROM THE SETTLEMENT	230
48.	WE START OUR OWN SCHOOL	233
49.	RAMBLING THOUGHTS	236
50.	PABLO CASALS: ERNEST BLOCH	241
51.	THE MUSEUM CONCERTS—TWENTY YEARS OF CONDUCTING	244
52.	WE HOUSE OUR SCHOOL	254
53.	ROSARIO SCALERO AND DR. HANS WEISSE: THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION	258
54.	ARTISTS AND THE SCHOOL: CORTOT: SCHNABEL	261
55.	WE FACE COMPETITION	264
56.	CREDO	267

ILLUSTRATIONS

DAVID MANNES	Frontispiece
DAVID MANNES, AGED FIVE	facing page 32
DAVID MANNES, VIOLINIST	96
THE MANNES QUARTET	176
CLARA DAMROSCH MANNES	192
STREET CONCERT	224
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART CONCERTS	240
THE DAVID MANNES MUSIC SCHOOL	256

MUSIC IS MY FAITH

PREFACE

"How old are you?"

"Nine. How old are you?"

"Nine and a half."

The formula had begun. Faithfully following it, I spoke next:

"What does your father do?"

"My father's a banker." There was a world of satisfaction in her voice. With assumed nonchalance she flicked her hoop with a stick and ran after it a little way. Then stopped, turned back, and—without looking at me—asked: "What's your father?"

"He's a musician—"

"Oh—" She turned again, banged the hoop downhill and ran after it, her long curls bobbing.

I was left standing in a void of dissatisfaction. Anticlimax hung in the air like an unresolved chord. Not that I was not proud of my father's work: the honor and excitement of music-making were long since clear to me, and I was free of that natural awe for money which lies in most children. Nor was it her contempt and indifference that worried me most.

The trouble was, "musician" was not enough. I imagined the dialogue resumed:

"Is he famous—like Paderewski?"

"Well—not exactly—"

"Does he make a lot of money?"

"No—not very much."

How could I tell her? How could I say that Father was more than a musician, that the word was not enough? It was impossible. I could not make a story out of Father. There were no headlines. There were no labels. There were no sensations.

. . . . .

I have said that David Mannes cannot be labeled. The only proof of this is to test the many labels that have been affixed to him. Take this first and most obvious one: musician. He is not a composer, for he does not write music. He is not a virtuoso because, although he has appeared with distinction as a violinist on concert stages here and abroad, he has neither the egotism, the nervous intensity nor the co-ordinative brilliance necessary to a soloist. For twenty years he has conducted, with recognized musicianship and command, much of the best orchestral music that has been heard in New York; and yet a total lack of histrionics and a more tangible lack of a permanent orchestra have prevented him from being known primarily as a conductor.

For thirty years he taught the violin, and for twenty has been, together with his wife, the director of a successful music school. And yet the word "teacher" does not fit him. Having no system of pedagogy, he is no pedagogue. The

words "educator" and "institution" fill him with horror.

No less do the words "humanitarian" and "uplifter"—two other labels. And yet he would be the last to deny that music with him was never a personal end but always a means towards imparting a certain light, a certain truth and passion and faith to the hearts of the people. This he has done in very actual ways: in the founding of the first music school settlements; in the bringing of musical education to Negroes; in the giving of countless hours of help and advice to the poor and talented, to the rich and oppressed, to the lost and bewildered of all classes and ages; and in the conducting of those free concerts which have brought the poor in thousands to the Metropolitan Museum of Art eight nights a winter.

He has even—and to his utmost distress—been called a saint, so evident is the graciousness of his spirit, the gentleness and purity of his personal emanation. Yet, although his life has shown him to be incorruptible, and totally free from arrogance or guile or meanness or greed, he is not a saint. His spirit has had its large share of torture, but he has not mortified his flesh. Although he has been poor himself, he does not extol poverty. As for chastity, though scandal and intrigues have gained no footing in his life, he does not condemn the unchaste. And he performs no miracles; unless, after you have read his story, you find his growth into wisdom a miracle. And yet the rise of a poor boy into eminence is too familiar a tale to be a miracle; particularly if that eminence is so hard to classify, so elusive of definition, as his.

"So what?" you say—with perfect reason. Why should we hear the story of this particular man? If it is not the story of a great musician or a great teacher, or a great organizer, why should it be told?

I shall answer this: because it is the story of an intensely human being whose entire life is a study in faith. A man whose wisdom—a wisdom gained from a profound doubt in self—has influenced innumerable people and changed the lives of dozens. A man who, belonging to no club, no creed, no party and no faction, is more genuinely and widely loved than many with greater talents and greater power. A man, as much because of his failings as because of his virtues, of unique and memorable charm.

I shall say also this: that the time will come when a great number of people, numbed by the thousand-times reiterated screams in print, will no longer be excited by murder or by speed or by acts of lust or by the aberrations of the insane. Violence will annihilate itself, and high black letters will blur and jumble before exhausted eyes. To these people there will come a new order of sensations. Humility—patience—incorruptibility—these, for their very rareness, will be headline material. And at that time, the story of a man who, in a world that has forgotten Christ, remains a Christian—that too will be a sensational story.

Until then, take his chronicle as you will: as a moving tale of struggle and achievement; as a fresh and intimate picture of the early musical life of New York City; as the revealing of a father to his children (which was the initial

reason for its telling); as any human story by which other humans can measure themselves.

. . . . .

There has been a fad in contemporary literature of not describing the appearances of characters. This seems as foolish as the omission of dialogue. For surely you cannot dissociate a man from his face; or his words from his voice. Expression and intonation give meaning to speech. And the shape of a man's nose can alter the course of his life.

Certainly, the appearance of David Mannes is as notable as his personality, and plays no little part in this chronicle of his development. In his youth, his lean long figure, rugged features and thick black hair led many to believe he had American-Indian blood. Later, when his hair turned gray and William Gillette played Conan Doyle's famous sleuth on Broadway, elevator boys and parlor maids took him for Sherlock Holmes. Now, white-haired, more deeply grooved, and thin as ever, he passes either as an Englishman or as the American he profoundly feels himself to be.

There are other things you notice when you see him first: the jutting gray tangle of his eyebrows; the asymmetry of his face, one side harrowed, the other serene; the twist of his mouth; the elegance of his walk. Other idiosyncrasies that characterize him are his passion for dogs, dancing, frankfurters, soaps, the English race, and movies, good and bad; his inability to look squarely into a mirror (he has never cared for his face); and his intense distaste for carrying more

than a dollar on his person (he dislikes actual money and any transactions connected with it—a feeling not uninfluenced by his horror of mathematical calculation).

The rest of David Mannes should reveal itself in his own story.

. . . . .

As the reader will notice, I have spurred my father's memory by interjecting questions and comments at certain intervals of his narrative—which, as I have said, was originally written for us children. We, therefore, are the "you" to whom he speaks continually in this book. And although the audience is now a different and larger one, this first approach has a directness and simplicity which it seemed unwise to change.

MARYA MANNES

ONE

THE PEOPLE I COME FROM

MANNES—where does that name come from? Who are they? There are Manes in Spain, and Manets in France, Manneses in Norway and Mannesmans in Germany. They may all at one time have sprung from the same root, but who knows? There is no Burke, no Debrett for obscure wanderers. And wanderers the Manneses surely were, being of Jewish blood. But the subterranean river of their march breaks into light in a small Polish village. And with it emerges Simon Mannes, the grandfather of my father.

He was a journeyman-baker, Simon Mannes—who tramped all over German Poland and Prussia, baking as he went. (A nice clean craft—I always loved the smell of fresh baking.) He was naturally then a man of roving habits, seldom at his home in Poland, something of a philosopher they say, and quite progressive. At any rate, he had plenty of time walking on the low, flat plains between the villages—under those wide and melancholy skies—to contemplate as much

as he chose. Once in the villages, though, he was as convivial as you please, and very popular. He was born of an orthodox Jewish family, but as he grew older he acquired as many devoted friends among Christians as among those of his own race. I think this is a proof of his intelligence, for only the limited Jews want to wall themselves up with their own kind. That clannishness—a sort of aggressive defiance—has never done them any good.

Simon was very tall and very thin—Father said I looked just like him—and he married my grandmother quite early. Her name, the only one I remember, was Mirelle. They had two children: my father, Henry, born at Povidz in 1833, and his sister Rose, who married a rabbi, cantor of the Synagogue in Wriezen, a little village on the Oder about fifty kilometers from Berlin.

You knew my father—he was of medium height, rather stocky, and wore a beard and mustache; and I remember his telling us with great pride that it was said he looked like General Grant. He was always punctilious in dress, far beyond the men of his class.

He was fairly well educated, wrote a fine hand, and had a small talent in drawing; but of what use was that in feeding seven children? Even so, I think if he had had any chance at all to develop such a talent, however slight, he would have been a happier man.

Schiller was his great poet, and one of my very early memories of him, when he was not reading the daily paper, was seeing him poring over a large book, which I subsequently

discovered to be the complete works of that most German of German writers.

I know very little about my maternal grandparents except that they lived to a very old age. It seems to be a family trait! My mother's father died in Berlin at the age of 104. At his hundredth birthday he received a message of congratulation from Kaiser Wilhelm I. My mother's family name was Wittkowsky, and she was born in 1831, in Wittkowo, German Poland. Her name was Nathalia. She was small, had a charming figure and regular pretty features, all of which she maintained until she died at the age of eighty-four.

My mother had three brothers, the outstanding one being Simon Wittkowsky. He received an excellent education, served in the army, and was decorated for gallantry in action. Later in life he became an interior decorator and founded a fine business in antiques of rare value, which developed into one of the principal houses in Berlin. These collections were housed in a beautiful building of their own on the Markgrafen Platz. After the Franco-Prussian war my uncle received the commission from Kaiser Wilhelm I to decorate and furnish the royal castle at Strasburg.

Simon Wittkowsky had three sons, Carl, George and Paul. Carl had married great wealth, and devoted himself to literary work. He wrote the libretto of Moszkowski's opera *Boabdil.* George became a doctor of medicine, Paul a lawyer. Maximilian Harden, the famous German pamphleteer, political critic and litterateur, was also a Wittkowsky from German Poland; and, I am told, a first cousin of mine.

My mother received practically no education, for her mother died during her formative years; and Nathalia, as the only girl in the family, had to keep house for her father and brothers, instead of going to school. Later on this fact became the constant sorrow of her life. How often she said to me that she wanted to be born again only that she might go to school and learn how to read and write! I often asked Father why he didn't teach her to read and write. He told me that she had too much pride to show him her ignorance, and would always refuse any correction that he might offer.

I taught her to sign her name and to read a little, but it was too late. Organized and trained mental co-ordination was lacking. Instead, she was a keen observer, hot-tempered, often very witty; a dear and warm friend to all, her smile captivating and her good sense proverbial. She was very romantic; a hero-worshiper as far as actors, poets and statesmen were concerned, and possessed of an elementary love of music so strong that she was deeply moved at hearing good music. I shall never forget my mother's excitement in passing before the house of Dr. Leopold Damrosch, whom she had seen from the gallery of the Metropolitan Opera House conducting *Die Walküre*. (Worshiping him as she did, it was no small miracle to her that she lived to see me married to Dr. Damrosch's daughter, Clara.) Father took her to concerts, the opera and the theatre; or, when their work was done and the children put to bed, read to her.

TWO

BOYHOOD IN THE TENDERLOIN

MY MOTHER and father were married in Berlin, and my eldest brother was born there; but before he was two years old, in 1860, the family of three embarked at Hamburg on a sailing vessel bound for New York, and after a tempestuous voyage of forty-one days they reached America. Here the other six children were born, the youngest a girl, the others boys.

Father, who followed his father's trade, and had served his apprenticeship as a baker in Germany, was fortunate in securing employment at the original Purcell's bakery on Broadway and Thirty-first Street. He kept his position for some time, during which he studied English, mainly through reading the New York *Herald*, to which he subscribed and which he read for the rest of his life.

All the bakers at that time had their ovens in the cellar, and as the work-day was then more than a twelve-hour shift with no possibility of sunlight for the workers, my father became ill and decided that he must give up his calling and undertake a business which would give him his

own responsibility and his own independence. With the help of his cousin, Henry Davis, he opened a small clothing shop at 302 Seventh Avenue, the family living over the shop. It was an old, rather tumbledown frame building, comprising two building lots. Here I was born, the fifth child; but I numbered among the children the third, for two of them were poisoned and died as the result of an impure vaccine in the inoculation against smallpox. After that my mother naturally refused to have any of her children vaccinated. The health laws in those days were not as strictly enforced, and it happened that my next brother, Owen, then became frightfully ill of smallpox. My mother, frantic with fear, threatened the doctor with death if he reported the case to the Board of Health, and he—incredible as it may seem—kept silence and finally brought my brother safely through with little sign of the ravage of the disease. I can only imagine that Dr. Teller must have been a devoted friend of Mother's, or else he could not have disobeyed the very necessary precaution of the health authorities.

Whether I was naturally of a supersensitive and nervous organism, or whether I became so through an accident early in life, I cannot tell; but my sensitivity, not alone to sight and sound but to every small detail of my environment, grew to an extraordinary degree. This accident shaped and altered the course of my life, influenced the thought and action of the future years. From this time my conscious life and memory dates.

That picture of you in the velvet suit was before the accident, wasn't it, Father? You looked so plump and sleek and unimaginative—not at all like yourself. You might almost have been a rather ordinary little boy, a bit too complacent about your Sunday clothes and your fine shoes.

When I was five years of age there were five boys, the youngest of whom had just had his first birthday. In teaching him to walk, holding his hand and moving backward I fell into a boiler of steaming linen which Mother had only just taken off the stove. My shrieks brought the rest of the family, but not until I had become literally parboiled. The doctor was called and held out but scant hope of my recovery. I was severely scalded from my shoulder blades to the base of my spine, and completely across the back. It is needless to say that I suffered agonies. The mustard plasters they put on the open sores did not help much. In the long convalescence I was unable to sit or walk, and in lying, lay on my stomach for years afterwards. I bear the scars, white and raised, to this day. You know how conscious of them I still am—and how terrified of the curious gaze at my back when I go in bathing.

I remember, after being confined to the house for months, being pushed about the streets ignominiously in a baby carriage by my father; and many details of the doctor's visits and the pain these visits entailed in the daily treatment of my wounds. But such suffering does not last forever.

When I became stronger I spent the summers in Coblesskill, New York, at the home of my father's cousin, a pensioned soldier of the Civil War. He had married the daughter of a Lutheran dominie, and at the dominie's farm I also spent weeks every summer. I loved the life, and my boy companions, and the smell of the country.

I learnt at the farm to fish and to swim, in haying time I was in the fields all day, and while I was unable to do much, everything interested me: the care and milking of the cows, the birth of calves and pigs, the life of all the farm animals.

So that's when the seed was sown! How often have we heard you say:

"I want a farm some day, children. I want a place with horses and lots of dogs, and a barn where I can putter and make things out of wood."

Farm machinery attracted me very much, and I studied and finally understood the working of the parts of mowers, threshers, etc., which had only been invented shortly before. These summers spent in the lovely Schoharie and Otsego counties were heaven to me, principally as they meant the only escape from the frightful sordidness and squalor of the neighborhood in which we lived in the city.

You see, I was born practically in the center of that infamous and notorious district, known in the seventies and eighties as the Tenderloin. Twenty-seventh Street from Sixth to Seventh Avenues was entirely given over to houses of prostitution. On three out of the four corners of every

street were saloons—the kind with swing-doors and sawdust and the smell of liquor and sweat coming out of them—and the number of drunken bums lying about was such a natural thing that one took it as a matter of course. You just stepped around or over them. Police raids and evictions of our neighbors were frequent; and I remember these scantily-clad, disheveled women being herded and driven off in police wagons, yelling and crying and struggling against the policemen. Fights between street gangs were almost a nightly experience and we used to keep indoors in terror of our lives. I suppose to some that surrounding evil might have held a romantic lure. But not to me. Not then or ever. I hate mess and confusion and squalor. It frightens me as a mob frightens me and leaves profound depression in its wake.

The school I went to at that time was no bulwark either against that depression or the squalor that caused it. Nor was it in any sense of the word an education. I am often ashamed of my meager vocabulary and of my floundering method of expression; more so than ever when I come into contact with trained minds. The fact is, I had only four years of schooling in my entire life. And what schooling!

Public School 55 (at Twentieth Street and Sixth Avenue) was the background of miserable boyhood months. The hard benches, the crowded rooms, the fetid atmosphere, the spitting boys and tired, irritable teachers—these were no incentive to learning. The filth was indescribable (there was no plumbing whatsoever), and the heat and litter of the

crowded basement yard at recess-time made even that small oasis sordid. The end of the school day left me spent and wretched.

I was happy only at my mother's side, and took delight in helping her in her household duties: peeling potatoes, making beds, hanging those stiff "lace" curtains, and even ironing the simple pieces of laundry. My brothers made fun of me on account of these rather feminine activities. I did, however, learn how to use tools and make minor repairs in our home which always looked sweet and clean.

As a matter of fact, I was something of a pioneer in the family circle. I introduced the first toothbrush, and—more revolutionary even than that—suggested the change from day-shirt into a night-shirt for sleeping purposes. Heretofore, one shirt had served adequately (so they thought) for the entire twenty-four hours.

At school I was not a brilliant student, for I was interested only in history and physiology. I was made unhappy by the simplest mathematical problem and when I did happen to pass examinations, I forgot completely, shortly afterwards, everything I had learnt through pressure. Understanding had to come to me through other agencies, never through conscious pursuit. I did, however, skip a class or two during my short school life. I don't think I deserved such rapid promotion; it was due rather to the need of making room in the overfilled classes of the lowest grades, each room of which held fifty to sixty boys at a time.

About this time my father gave up his clothing business

and moved to a building next door to No. 302, where he began to build up a furniture shop with special attention to antiques—one of the first shops of this kind in the city. He bought and sold many unique and precious pieces of old china and old books. These books attracted me, and I read, and somehow became absorbed in, many an old volume that I couldn't completely grasp. One of these was Renan's *Life of Christ*, in English of course; many were old Bibles. Until that time in Sunday School and during the Jewish holidays, my only Bible history was the Old Testament, for which I felt no interest. I even fought against further knowledge of it.

So it was the New Testament which I read and read, and my love and enthusiasm for its central figure grew and grew. This experience was another profound impression, perhaps the most important of my entire life, and certainly the most sustaining.

THREE

LITTLE DAVID, PLAY ON YOUR FIDDLE

I DON'T know what started me on music. How do those things start? Some impulse. There wasn't any outside urge. I simply began to be curious about sounds—about their pitch and quality. And one day I tried stretching ordinary strings at various tensions, and stopping them with my fingers to secure different tones. Till then I had only heard street fiddlers and those poor hacks who played on ferry and excursion boats to Coney Island, where we had gone to picnic several times. But these experiences gave me the idea of making a "fiddle" out of a cigar box, with a piece of wood for the neck and a peg to stretch one string upon. This fiddle of mine brought my parents to a great decision. I should become a violinist. They had accepted the fact that since my accident I was too frail of body to be strong enough for ordinary labor. What they did not know was that they had settled, involuntarily, upon a calling which demanded of all things physical vitality and enormous labor, and more nervous tension than my injured body and

David Mannes, Aged Five

temperament could stand. Then, besides, there was the cost of tuition to fit me for a musician, a serious outlay which they could not really afford. However, I was so enthusiastic over the plan that I gathered here and there old bottles, rags and bits of lead pipe, which I sold to the neighboring junk-man; and this helped to pay for a violin, case and bow, which cost five or six dollars.

My first teacher was Herrman Brody, the leader of the orchestra of Wallack's Theatre at Thirteenth Street and Broadway, friend and countryman of my father's, and he received seventy-five cents for the weekly lesson. He often dozed and nodded during these hours, being tired and worn out from running a tea and coffee business in the daytime and playing at the theatre at night. He broke down in health, had to give up his tea business and his pupils. He recommended as his substitute the second violin in his orchestra, one Theodore Moses, a young man from Hamburg, an excellent musician, and to me a far more attractive player than Brody. I went for my lessons to his house on Sixth Street between Second and Third Avenues, where he lived with his father and mother, neither of whom could speak English. He seemed interested and very keen on my progress and I was happy to be with him, making rapid strides in my playing. Unfortunately, after two years, in which time there were interruptions due to the expense of the lessons, Mr. Moses and my father had a serious misunderstanding, and my teacher felt so hurt that he refused to teach me again.

I was then sent to the New York College of Music on East

Seventieth Street, and studied violin with George Matska, a violin player in the Philharmonic Orchestra. Rafael Joseffy, the famous pianist, was the star member of the faculty. The College of Music was a private school and was directed by a Mr. Alexander, also of the Philharmonic. There I met a very attractive boy who was studying with Matska. We became friends and met very often at each other's houses, playing duets for two violins. His name was Fritz Williams—the boy actor who had already appeared in several plays produced by his father. His family were all stage folk; his mother then, and later his very attractive sister. These lessons with Matska and a place in the harmony class cost my father sixty dollars a quarter, and one season at the College was all that we could afford.

Then came—dressed in the clothing of a very nice sheep—my first disillusion. One day at school cards were handed to the boys on leaving the building, saying that free violin lessons would be given pupils of School Number 55, if they would come on the following Saturday morning to the Masonic Rooms on the top floor of a building on the corner of Eighth Avenue and Twenty-fifth Street. "Professor" Benjamin was to be the teacher and musical philanthropist. About one hundred of us showed up punctually at the time and place, and I was amazed to see so many of those rough-neck boys, whose pugnacity I had always feared.

When we were all seated, "Professor" Benjamin said that while the lessons were free, those boys who had no violins would buy them on the installment plan. The instruments,

however, must remain in his possession until the payments were completed. Furthermore, all students must buy their own book of instruction if they wished to study with him. I bought such a book. I had, of course, my violin, but only attended two lessons. By that time the sordid deception of the whole business had seeped even into my unworldly head. "Professor" Benjamin was my first phony. I suppose I ought to be grateful to him for that indirect lesson!

After that, I had to go on as best I could, learning much through the duet-playing with Fritz Williams, and through a fortunate circumstance that brought a lovely woman and a gifted pianist into my life—Charlotte Hazard, born in Dublin. She had studied on the Continent and had run away from a distinguished family and beautiful home to marry an English army officer.

For some time we had been anxious to move away from our horribly squalid environment, but we could only meet the increased rental of a better neighborhood by leasing furnished rooms. We rented a house at 215 West 25th Street, and here the Hazards came, bringing Mrs. Hazard's sister, to occupy two rooms. In these two rooms they slept and cooked their meals and set up their new Kroeger piano. Mrs. Hazard was a highly cultivated woman, speaking not only beautiful English—new and fascinating to my unaccustomed ears—but French and German also. For the first time I really knew what music was. I was almost continually in the Hazard rooms, listening to and ravished by my first hearings of Mozart, Bach, Beethoven and Chopin. She was so lovely,

Charlotte Hazard! so handsome and gay and witty. And I owe so much to her. I played to her accompaniment every day, new and marvelous music, not with much understanding, I am afraid, and with meager technical ability. But somehow Mrs. Hazard made me believe that I had talent; that is, at certain times only—for I was mostly of an opinion that as a musician I would never amount to anything. This lack of hope accounts in a measure for my deep and desperate depressions, and for the continual lassitude I lived in—a weariness that passed away only when I heard her playing and when she praised and approved of my fiddling. Then I would work harder than ever.

FOUR

JOHN DOUGLAS, NEGRO

Father sees a small black boy shuffling in the street; a pickaninny with enormous eyes and a sectional woolly scalp; a Negro porter flashing a wide, white smile. "God, I love those people!" When he goes to the great colored Fiske University in Tennessee, of which he is a trustee, he comes back with a light in his eye. "How I like those people! I'm always happy when I'm with them. I never get tired of hearing them sing, talk, play. I love their voices and their warmth and their childlikeness. And they're such magnificent natural musicians; none of those pinched and constipated sounds that come out of overtrained white throats."

"I suppose my deep affection for Negroes really started with John Douglas—"

"John Douglas? Who was John Douglas, Father?"

One morning when I was practicing in the basement of our house, the doorbell jangled in our areaway. Mother opened the door to a rather fine-looking Negro, well-dressed,

short and stout, wearing a mustache and goatee à la Napoleon III. He asked my mother, most deferentially, who was playing the violin. Mother answered "My son." Noticing my mother's broken English, he then proceeded to speak in good and fluent German, saying that his name was John Douglas, and that he was a violinist. Could he see me? He was shown in and asked me to play for him. After that he played for me on my small violin with such ability that I was amazed at his performance.

We became good friends and he taught me many important things in violin playing. He was a dear, gentle companion in many a walk and talk. Born of a slave mother, who, after the war, left the South for Philadelphia, he had from childhood shown a decided musical talent and very early had received some instruction. Some white people, evidently his mother's employers, became much interested in the boy and finally sent him abroad to study with Rapoldi in Dresden. Rapoldi was the most famous pupil of Spohr and became devoted to his young Negro pupil; the boy's master, as an evidence of his regard, gave him a chin rest, modeled and carved by Spohr, which in turn Douglas offered to me. It was cut out of a solid block of rosewood made to fit over the tailpiece. It seemed too precious a thing for me to receive, and I declined the gift. I can remember Douglas' disappointment at my refusal. I am very sorry that I did not take it; it was offered so spontaneously.

After studying with Rapoldi for some years, Douglas

went to Paris to study the French school of violin playing. In both countries he worked steadily at composition, playing the piano and later on the violoncello. He learned to speak French easily, but in America he had had no occasion to use any foreign tongue. With my father and mother he spoke German. He composed much music, of which the piles of manuscript in his home were ample evidence. He occasionally played at entertainments given by people of his race, but outside of his friends few knew of his existence. He tried to enter a symphony orchestra in this country, but those doors were closed to a colored man. Being of a modest and retiring nature he was not able to insist on being heard. Douglas was like a fish out of water, ahead of his time by thirty or forty years. He grew despondent and later on began to drink. I believe I was his only pupil, but there never was a question of payment for such service as he rendered me. I recall so vividly my playing Mazas, Pleyel and Viotti duets with him, for two violins, violin and viola, and cello and violin. In this way I learnt to read at sight and to play with better rhythmic values.

In order to augment his meager income he learnt to play the guitar and played it remarkably. I remember his performance of his own arrangement for the guitar of the *Tannhäuser March*, and other excerpts of this opera which had been played in New York for the first time only a few years before. Like Paganini, he adored the guitar and dived deep into its technical possibilities. I was always aware of

his artistic and intellectual superiority, and envied him his musical erudition; an envy which awakened the desire in me for further knowledge.

Now do you realize how much John Douglas meant to me?

FIVE

UNION SQUARE THEATRE—AND ACTOR-WORSHIP

We are all at the theatre: Mother, Father, my brother and myself. Mother is very excited—she always is at the theatre. Leopold and I are excited, too, but are at that age when we think restraint a sign of maturity. Father keeps looking at the musicians in the pit. They are playing a selection from Victor Herbert. The house lights go down, the footlights go up, bathing the bottom of the curtain in a golden glow that promises everything. Father is still looking at the musicians' pit. "What are you thinking of, Father?"

"I'm thinking of a pale, thin, fourteen-year-old boy, in that pit. Myself, over fifty years ago."

My mother and father adored the theatre, and went very often to performances of Palmer's Stock Company at the Union Square Theatre, on the south side of the square, now a cheap dress emporium. The leader of the orchestra was Henry Tissington, an Englishman whom my father ap-

proached to secure a place for me in his orchestra of ten men. Of course I had to play for him; but not being a member of the Musical Union, and having had no experience, I was ineligible. Mr. Tissington, however, suggested my playing in the orchestra for practice—naturally without pay. Such apprenticeship was quite common in those days, and all eligible young players had this fine opportunity of learning to play in an orchestra and to follow the beat of the conductor's stick. Later on, the Musical Mutual Protective Union forbade this practice for the reason that a few dishonest conductors would place these unpaid members of an orchestra and charge them up to the management as regular salaried members.

My joy at being allowed to go to the theatre every night and two matinees a week cannot be conceived. It was the happiest engagement of my life. I would be at the theatre long before any of the orchestra came, walking on the stage, becoming acquainted with that mysterious life behind the scenes, the lifting and moving of scenery, the miraculous lighting of border gaslights by electric sparks, and the blinding glare of calcium light projectors. It was a complete fairyland to me. Sometimes during the day, when the theatre was dark and empty, I used to walk down to Union Square and talk by the hour to a captivating old stage-doorkeeper. I listened enraptured while he told me of the wonderful actor folk he had met; the more famous they were, the more intimate acquaintanceship did he claim!

Palmer's Stock Company was renowned at that time.

Among the members was Charles Thorne, leading man, beautiful Sara Jewett, leading lady, Parselle, Owen Fawcett, Stoddard—"old man Stoddard" as he was affectionately called. "Star" guests at this theatre were Joseph Jefferson, Clara Morris, Fannie Ward, and Alexander Salvini, son of the great Tomaso. I remember one night an hour before curtain raising, standing at the half-open door of Jefferson's dressing-room when that charming man asked me to enter. When I told him I was a member of the orchestra he told me how much he loved music, and how delighted he was with the solo playing of a young Frenchman, Louis Kapp, who played simple but attractive pieces, always between the first and second acts. I myself marveled at Kapp's fine style and his fluent fingers. But even as I marveled I was filled with depression, for I felt I should never play as well as he did. Twenty years afterwards, when I was concertmaster of the New York Symphony Orchestra, Louis Kapp sat behind me. He still showed the quality of his fine French schooling, but the intervening years had taken toll of his enthusiasm and warmth of sound, and he had lost his nerve and desire to appear as soloist.

You smile sometimes, I know, at my almost childish hero-worship of actors. It started at the Union Square Theatre, and no amount of so-called Broadway commercialism seems to dim it. The magic of that pretense is too potent. And the people who purvey that magic seem endowed—to me at least—with a special quality, a sort of golden quality, that removes them from us other mortals.

The entrance of the man who—those long years ago at the Union Square—most of all inspired this hero worship was unheralded; for the last time, I suppose, in his life. Palmer had bought a new French play, *A Parisian Romance*—for his famous stock company. The rehearsals went well—I always managed to be present at most of them—until Mr. Stoddard threw up his part of the Baron Chevrial, which he considered too small and unsuited to him, and which was in reality a minor role. There was little time left before the first night of the play and frantic search was made for a substitute for Stoddard. A young and very talented actor was found to be just the right man for the part, but he was singing a season of light opera at the Standard Theatre, and at that particular time was in the cast of *Les Manteaux Noir*. However, his release was secured, and the only condition he made was that he be permitted to enlarge and develop the part of the Baron Chevrial. This he did with such remarkable ingenuity that it became the leading part in the play, and on the opening night this young man—Richard Mansfield—scored for the play an immediate and huge success. Mansfield was made, and so was *A Parisian Romance*. I shall never forget the breathless excitement, the thunderous applause that rose solely on that brilliant performance of Mansfield's. I could not believe it was the same young man I had seen at the rehearsals, for here on the stage above me was a rickety old roué of the Paris boulevards—to the life.

It was in my modest place in the orchestra of the Union Square Theatre that I heard the English language spoken

with a beauty strange and entrancing to me. Charles Thorne's fine voice particularly made a deep impression on a young and very sensitive boy who had only heard the crass and ordinary jargon of the streets and his family's necessarily broken English. My father at that time spoke Polish to my mother, and a strangely accented English to us children. The schoolteachers paid no attention to the correction of poor speech in the pupils. So while the other musicians went under stage to play cards during the performance, I remained in the orchestra pit, listening enthralled every night to the eloquent speech of these players.

I began reading in deadly earnest all the best there was in English literature, much to the displeasure of my parents who felt that I was wasting my time on books "that were not true" when I had better, and much more to my profit, practice my violin. I had already left school, being then fifteen years of age. I was not strong, was easily tired, and unable to practice at long periods. I had to spread my few hours of practice throughout the day. Besides I had no teacher and no one to prepare for. I saw even then that I must earn money to pay for lessons, and at the end of that season went to Joyce's Band Headquarters and asked for jobs.

SIX

I PLAY IN HONKY-TONKS

THAT summer, through Joyce, I played at a skating rink at Coney Island, twice a day, from two to three hours each session. The band consisted of one violin (myself, then sixteen), one cornet, one trombone, one clarinet, one flute, and drums; there was no piano, no second violin, no viola. One of the Joyce brothers was in this curious band. The incessant noise of the roller skates, the horrible band, the long hours and the heat told on me heavily, and I asked Joyce to give me something else to do. He sent me to play at balls in the city, and on one of these "jobs" I met a young pianist who also played the violin, Emil Baake, the son of a shoemaker. We were sent out together many times, playing cotillions at places up the Hudson and on Long Island. The music for these cotillions consisted wholly of waltzes. Sometimes we would have fifteen or twenty on the music stands at one time, playing one after the other for hours without intermission. We played all the Strauss and Waldteufel waltzes, which I loved, and learnt to play with swing and rhythm through Baake's many suggestions. Usu-

ally we played from nine until eleven, then had supper preceding another session of about an hour.

Emil and I made friends and were much together, playing good music at both our houses. We had an old square upright, bought cheaply by my father with a lot of fine antiques at an auction. Baake introduced me to many dance musicians, and, as I began to make a reputation among them, my earnings increased.

One summer, with Harry Hall as cornettist, we went to Asbury Park. We hoped for engagements for dance music at the many hotels there, and were successful in securing enough at least to pay expenses. Being at Asbury Park at this time was a godsend to me. There were long hours on the beach or bathing in the ocean, and very often rowing on Deal Lake.

As the result of my summer's work I had a few dollars in hand. This meant I would have money for lessons. On my return to the city I sought out a teacher of reputation, August Zeiss, a pupil of Spohr who lived on the lower East Side. He was a dry old man, given to drink and snuff. He always sat in one place. Beside his chair, on the dingy carpet, there was a dark brown spot where droppings from his incessant use of the snuffbox had left their indelible mark. At the close of the lessons, of an exact duration of one hour, no more, no less, his giant of a wife came in to receive from me the two dollars in payment for the lesson. I learnt afterwards that she did this to keep her little, shriveled husband from spending it at the nearest Bierstube.

Zeiss taught only music by Spohr, which he played in a dry, mechanical manner and unyielding tone, but with impeccable intonation. If any of his pupils tried to use vibrato, experimenting in this attractive but dangerous medium for warmth of tone, he would fly into a paroxysm of fury. I took the risk, however—surreptitiously, to be sure—and knowing no better, developed a faulty vibrato which gave me years of labor to correct. My teacher, following the method of his master, had divided the use of the bow into three sections, and woe betide the students of Zeiss if at the playing of a particular passage a "wrong" part of the bow was used.

I stayed with Zeiss one year. I could not stand the blunting of any individual idea of my own, nor the discouragement that came through the lack of musical enthusiasm on the part of my teacher. It was Spohr, always Spohr. I went through the entire Spohr school, a rather large book, several concertos, and smaller pieces, all of which I found at that time dry and deadening. But today I am grateful for the discipline of this experience, and in our "freedom" of modern teaching realize the lack of such training.

During this winter I played in dancing schools on Avenue A in the lower part of the city, often until the early morning hours, and in Carey's band at various halls—Lyric Hall at Sixth Avenue and Forty-first Street, which still stands, and Walhalla Hall in Canal Street.

Whenever I see murder headlines in the tabloids I think of the ball given by the Coal Shovelers Association at that

Walhalla Hall. During the intermission Carey was handed six dollars by the secretary of the Association to "treat the band." Being the only one on the little balcony besides the leader, Carey turned to me, saying that I was to say nothing about this to the other "fellers." He had no sooner started the second part of the dance program, when a frightful scream was heard above the din, and then all the lights went out. I sat in the darkness (we had suddenly stopped playing) huddled in fear and bewilderment, when, close behind me, a rough voice yelled "Play on, you little son of a b——." A man had been stabbed and carried out before the lights went up; then the police came in and the ball was over.

In the cold of the early morning I walked up Broadway from Canal Street to my home at Twenty-fifth Street near Seventh Avenue, carrying my violin case and an iron folding stand. Chilled, weary, shocked, I arrived to find my mother waiting up for me with food and warm drink.

I never told her about the frightful places I played in. Instead I drew imaginary scenes of delight and pleasure that I lived through in my "musical activities."

SEVEN

THE M.M.P.U.—1883

All of the orchestral work I had done up to this time had necessarily been in the company of non-union musicians, for I did not belong to the union. Now, however, wishing to play with better-class musicians, I made my application to the Secretary of the Musical Mutual Protective Union and was soon summoned before the examining committee of the union. I found the chairman was Theodore Moses, my teacher of several years back, with whom my father had the quarrel that led to Moses' dismissal of me as a pupil. I felt on entering the room the antagonistic manner of the committee's chairman, and was certain that I would not be accepted. And so it turned out. I was heartbroken and felt that the world was against me. It seemed that all hope of ever being allowed to play in a good orchestra or of ever gaining the necessary experience which might make me eligible for playing under Damrosch or Theodore Thomas had now fled. My father went to see Moses, but he was not at home; his mother was, however, and told him that, on account of the grievous insult my father

had offered her son, I would never, never, be admitted into the union as long as he had any power to keep me out. And so I went on with my disheartening vocation as a dance player.

Still I tried and tried for possible means of escape, and one day in company with my father—I hadn't the courage to go alone—we called on W. L. Bowron, an Englishman, then leader of the Fourteenth Street Theatre orchestra, to ask for a position under him. He was very kind and asked me to come and play for him, which I did the next day. After hearing me he said he would engage me at $2.50 a performance or $17.50 per week for seven performances.

Then came the dreaded question. "Was I a member of the union?" Asking me why I wasn't I told him the story of Moses and the examination and the subsequent visit to his mother. He became interested, then indignant, saying that he was also a member of this committee but that on the day of my trial he had chanced to be absent. He took up the case immediately with the union, told the Moses episode and insisted on another hearing with Moses absent. I was not only admitted, but started in the following week as first violin under Bowron's leadership. Bowron never knew how much he had done for me, nor what important events came to pass because of his kindness. In thankfulness to his memory I have tried to repeat his kind act to other young people.

In those years I felt everything in life as deeply as I did the music I was playing. It was not the best temperament for

a boy lacking woefully in weight and physical endurance; and to attain the necessary technique of the instrument required long and arduous hours of persistent and unremitting effort. As a result I felt miserable and depressed most of the time, and the only surcease came through the ambitious optimism of my mother and in playing good music for someone, some neighbor who knew nothing about music and who thought my talent a miraculous one! I knew better, for hadn't I heard young d'Angremont, a wonderful Brazilian boy, play the Mendelssohn *Concerto*? and August Wilhelmj the Beethoven at Koster and Bial's, on Twenty-third Street near Sixth Avenue? How hopeless my dream seemed to be after such experiences! I bought these works even though, alas, I wasn't ready for them; but I did study them, nevertheless, by myself.

Now that I was a member of the union I was permitted to stand on the sidewalk, on Fourth Street, between the Bowery and Second Avenue, where the union was situated, among hundreds of fellow musicians; making acquaintances among them, so that I might become known and sought-after for a summer engagement. In August I was engaged on the street to substitute for a violinist playing at the Grant House, a mile from Catskill Village on the Hudson. I received fifteen dollars a week and board. Meals were eaten with the maids and coachmen in the basement of the hotel. My room was in a detached building in close proximity to my companion pianist and cornettist, who were not only most unsympathetic but decidedly unattractive in their way of

thinking and drinking and living in general. I enjoyed much more eating and talking with the coachmen and the maids, among whom I made friends, than being with my colleagues.

A great temptation came to me at Grant House. One sunny afternoon I rowed down the creek for about a mile, where it joined the Hudson, and to my delight I saw a beautiful, white ocean-going yacht lying at anchor. I circled her several times, then heard the kindly voice of a man calling from the deck, "Wouldn't you like to come aboard?" Down the landing steps came a sailor and, still amazed, I was led to the deck, where I met the owner, Mr. Norman L. Munroe, the publisher, Mrs. Munroe, and their daughter Norma for whom the yacht was named. They received me most cordially. We went down to the cabin, and soon a Japanese butler was bringing us tall, clinking glasses of ice-cold champagne. Then came an astonishing suggestion. Mr. Munroe said they were interested in my playing—they had listened to me the previous afternoon at the hotel—and since they were going to make a world cruise shortly in their yacht, wouldn't I like to come along as their guest, to play for them whenever I pleased? I could not believe my ears, and was overcome by their kindness, but told them it would interfere with my plans. I left them most regretfully, hoping to see them again. But I never did. Nor have I ever understood the generosity which prompted this amazing and unexpected proposition. It seemed completely fantastic and unreal.

"But why, Father, why didn't you go? How could any poor young man, in your circumstances, struggling and unfulfilled, resist a chance like that?"

"I don't know. I have often puzzled about that myself. I suppose I knew somehow down deep that there was a definite road for me to follow in life, and that this would have led me away from it."

"Somehow that seems to have been a sort of spiritual landmark in your life. If you had gone on that yacht, you would have become a totally different man—"

On my return to the city, I sought out Mr. Herman Brandt, concertmaster of the Philharmonic, hoping to have lessons with him. He was a superior kind of man, and I liked him very much. He left, however, in a few months, to accept an engagement in California, suggesting that I study with his successor in the orchestra, Carl Richter Nicolai. I stayed several seasons with him, studying Rode caprices, Viotti concertos, also those of Spohr, including the *Gesang Scene* by this composer. His best pupil was Gustave Saenger who later gave up the study of the violin to work in the music store of Carl Fischer on Cooper Square, where he was an influential member of the firm until his recent death.

I was now quite steadily employed in the city, was paying for my lessons, and helping in a small way to increase Mother's fund, which had to provide food and raiment for our very large family. Besides this I was saving money.

EIGHT

ROAD WORK

In an interim of ~~unemploy~~-ment in the theatre I went on tour with the Lillian Conway Opera Company of Philadelphia. We left with nine men in the orchestra, and Harry Lauer as conductor. The singer, Miss Conway, a tall and rather portly soprano, had an excellent, trained voice and seemed to be a good musician. We started up the Hudson, our first performance at Poughkeepsie being *La Belle Helène* by Offenbach; then followed other towns in quick succession, with presentations of *The Chimes of Normandy*, *La Perichole*, and several other operettas which I do not now recall. Jeff de Angelis was the principal singing actor in the company, playing the miser in the *Chimes* and humorous parts in other works.

The members of the orchestra had left us, one by one, until the leader and I were the only ones. The "orchestra" then consisted of one violin and a piano, Lauer doing splendid service, conducting, playing, prompting, and singing (in no hushed voice) with the chorus, which had also shrunk to ineffective proportions. We finally came to Dover, New

Jersey, with this meager company; the cast, to every man and woman, remaining despite unpaid salaries. I had to send home for money from my savings to pay my living expenses. I paid in each town one dollar for a bed in a rooming house, and ate in the cheapest eating places. I did, however, love the life, the music and my companions. They took much solicitous care of me. I was young, in my eighteenth year, and I naturally enjoyed being such an important and perhaps indispensable member of the company! Besides, I was learning independence and a certain fearlessness in playing that stood me in good stead later on.

But springtime came, and I felt that I must go back home to look for a summer engagement. Miss Conway personally begged me to stay, promising to sell her jewelry and to pay me back-salary due. This I hadn't the heart to accept and reluctantly begged them to secure someone in my place, which they did. The company disbanded shortly afterwards.

It was about this time that I met Loren Bragden, leader of the Rutgers College Glee Club, living with his mother and sister near the campus of the college at New Brunswick, New Jersey. He engaged me as soloist for the series of spring concerts on tour. We played at a number of towns up the Hudson as far as Cohoes and Troy. I was happy to be with these genial, well-educated young men of "good" families. They were all so kind and interested. They wanted me to go to their college, little knowing how badly prepared I was to enter collegiate training or the preparatory work

leading to an entrance examination. The idea itself was very alluring, if only in the opportunity (which up to then had naturally been denied me) of associating with well-bred young men. But what I wanted above all else was to go on with my violin. The years were slipping by, and when I remembered the playing of young d'Angremont and another prodigy, Michael Banner, both younger than I, I realized that my work and study must not be diverted from the plans I had made for myself. I was saving as much of my earnings as possible, questioning the outlay of even the smallest sum. I wanted to go to Europe to study.

NINE

STAGE-STRUCK AND ART-STRUCK

In the autumn I was back once more at the Fourteenth Street Theatre. Since it was a "Combination House"—a theatre rented to producers and weekly engagements of traveling companies, there were sometimes gaps of weeks in our employment.

The first play that autumn was *The Old Homestead*, with Denman Thompson as the old farmer with the wayward son. I suppose I must be branded as naïve when I say that the farmhouse set was beautiful. It had a "real" well and oaken bucket, and a brook of real water, which started in an ell way back on the Fifteenth Street side, at the stage entrance, high enough so that the incline was sufficient for the water to run down to center stage, form a waterfall over some rocks, and splash into a pool. I cannot help it, that sort of thing still delights me. And it certainly delighted people then. We played old American songs, and accompanied Denman Thompson in his singing of *The Old Oaken Bucket* and *Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight*. It brought back my summers on the farm in Otsego County and I loved it.

The succeeding play, *Fascination*, with Cora Tanner in the lead, I remember well, for it gave me my first chance to conduct the orchestra and to follow the cues for the dramatic music. Bowron, you see, now controlled the music at another theatre, too—the Bijou at Thirty-second Street, Broadway—and while he superintended the orchestra there, he sometimes left me in charge at Fourteenth Street.

Next came the engagement of Robert Mantell in a revival of Dumas' *The Corsican Brothers*. I thought Mr. Mantell the handsomest man I had ever seen. I am afraid he was a bit flabby and touched-up when you saw him as a child, but at that time I wholeheartedly adored him. And I was hypnotized by the play, for I actually lived, ate and dreamed the part of Fabian. I could think of nothing else. There was one musical number for violin solo which always brought on Fabian. This I played with such feeling that nightly I wept at his death on the fall of the curtain. Then I read everything that Dumas had ever written and soaked myself thoroughly in the romance of cloak and sword.

During the first intermission I always played a short solo, standing up and facing the audience which always applauded me most appreciatively. After the performance one evening, just as I was about to dive beneath the stage, someone called to me from the orchestra row, and there stood a tall and handsome gentleman. "I liked your playing," he said; "what is your name?" Would I, he continued, care to play at the Salmagundi Club for him and his friends on the next Sunday night? Without pay, alas, he explained, for he could

not afford it. Naturally I was only too glad to accept. The Salmagundi Club now is rather an academic backwater, but then it was the center of a sort of gentlemanly Bohemia—a group of cultivated men who were the successful artists of the day. My new friend, in fact, was Henry W. Ranger, at that time a well-known water-colorist. (You grew up with one of his best pictures—that gray day on the Seine. It has great charm, even now when Ranger is to most a forgotten name.) Sunday night I went to the Salmagundi Club and to Ranger's accompaniment on the piano I played all the things I knew. They flattered me, and they spoiled me, but they didn't deceive me. I knew I was an immature musician and a half-baked violinist. I had merely "put something over."

The Salmagundi success led to the Lotos Club, and before I knew it my playing had ushered me into a new world: a world of cultivation and ideas, of successful men at ease with life. (To you, perhaps, their conversation would have seemed academic, possibly even dull, but to me it was a revelation.) At Ranger's Sunday night parties the painters of the moment—Harry Graham, Horatio Walker, Robert Reid (who knows them now?)—would talk for hours and hours about line, form and color, about Titian, Rembrandt and Velasquez, about tempera, oil and fresco.

They sent me to the Metropolitan Museum. They made me look at things in a new and astonishing light. I had always thought shadows were black. Now I saw a hundred different variations in the colors of shadow.

Ranger sent me to the libraries to read; not books on art alone, but novels by the best writers. And Mrs. Ranger coached me in many observances of behavior in polite society that stood me in good stead then and later on. My family were rather displeased at the many hours I spent in the Ranger household: they thought I was growing away from them and wasting my time, just to give pleasure to the Rangers by my playing. What an infinitesimal return for the new life they had opened my eyes to!

These experiences determined me more and more to seek European study, not alone for music but also to feel close to a part of the world that had given my splendid new friends so much to live by. I felt so ignorant, so uncultivated, that despair often followed this awakening into a larger and richer universe. But it led strangely enough to tolerance of and love for those about me who did not have my opportunities. For without my fiddle, that magic carpet carrying me into wonderful places, I should have been denied entrance.

TEN

SETBACKS—AND COMPENSATIONS

I HAD already saved several hundreds of dollars, which Father had banked for me, and I could now see the possibility of going to Germany, if not for a year or two, at least during the summer months, returning to work in the winter to earn and save enough to be able to go over again.

My father was now doing well in his business. It had begun to flourish under the clever assistance of my eldest brother and it encouraged my father to set up his son in a similar business on Eighth Avenue, backing this new venture on his own credit, which was good. He had a fine reputation for upright dealings and was progressive in his methods. This venture was not successful and my poor father, responsible financially for the new concern, and pressed by creditors for payment, was at his wits' end to secure funds to uphold his good name. His friends helped and so did the seven or eight hundred dollars I had saved to go to Europe. Father's good name was secure and I was happy that I could help in this small way. My trip abroad, however, was necessarily postponed.

"You mention that sacrifice pretty casually, Father. Was there no sense of martyrdom in it? Surely you allowed yourself self-pity?"

"Actually, no. But don't put that down to saintliness. It never even occurred to me to do anything else. Naturally I was disappointed—but what else could one do? They would have done the same for me."

Bowron had now placed me at the Bijou Theatre for the run of *The City Directory*, a revue in which Willie Collier was the young, agile and quietly funny star. *The City Directory*, which had musical numbers and many dances, was great fun for me, and sometimes I conducted an act on Saturday nights when Mr. Bowron went below to make out the salary envelopes for the orchestra.

I think it was shortly after this that he either lost the engagement of both theatres or left for his home in England. In either case I was out of a job, but I quickly found one at the Standard, where they were inaugurating a season of light opera under Victor Herbert. This venture did not have a long life; the orchestra, the largest I had played in, was reduced in size after the first week, and I, among others, was dismissed to cut expenses. Then came short engagements, one at the Alcazar, later the Broadway Theatre, where Agnes Huntington was starring in the operetta *Paul Jones*. Miss Huntington, a little later on, married the young and brilliant lawyer, Paul D. Cravath.

It was February, and a summer's engagement had to be

secured. I wrote to dozens of well-known summer hotels and waited anxiously for answers. In April, while I was turning the rancid turf in our backyard—we were living at West Twenty-fifth Street then—preparatory to making a garden (I did this every year) and fertilizing it with manure I had collected in the streets, I heard my mother's voice calling from the window, "A gentleman to see you." I quickly washed my hands and smoothed my tousled hair, and met this gentleman in the parlor. I was covered with soil and my boots were a sight. It was Myron Brown, manager of the Sagamore Hotel on Lake George.

"I got your application to furnish music," he said, "and you seem to be the kind of young man I need." Then he asked all kinds of questions, and finally said that I was to come with a pianist. He agreed to pay me seventeen dollars a week, and fifteen for the pianist.

"Don't you want to hear me play?" I asked.

"Oh, no," he said, "I don't know a damn thing about music. I'd rather take a chance on you, you look all right."

I was elated beyond words, and my mother rejoiced with me, though my absence in the summer was a sad experience for her, and of course I hated to leave her in the hot city.

I immediately engaged my friend, Emil Baake, as pianist. We rehearsed diligently, gathering a repertoire of concert as well as dance music. The summer was most successful, and the joy of living on that beautiful lake was limitless. I rowed, sailed and swam every day, and delighted in playing for the guests, making many friends among them. I would play for

the sheer joy of playing as long as they wanted me to. My father and mother came as my guests and the satisfaction of doing this for my parents made my happiness even greater than theirs.

The law of compensation being inexorable, though, this happiness was followed by a period of distress, for my mother fell ill. Years ago a heavy table had fallen on her, knocking her down and causing internal injuries. Mother refused to undergo a doctor's examination and chose instead to follow a neighbor's advice and go to a famous clairvoyant. This clairvoyant went into a trance and said that mother had suffered an injury in her side and that a large abscess had formed. Father then called in a diagnostician. Without knowing the incident of the clairvoyant he confirmed entirely her diagnosis. An operation became the only solution, and my father spent everything he had to give her the best possible care.

While my mother was at the hospital I did the providing for the family, marketed and cooked all the meals. And they were good ones, too—especially the steaks. At night, of course, I kept up my engagement at the theatre.

Thanks to Father's insistence on the finest doctors, the operation was brilliantly successful, and my mother for twenty-five years afterwards was well and strong.

ELEVEN

KOSTER AND BIAL'S

WHAT to do in the winter was always a problem that loomed higher as the summer drew to a close, for employment I must have in order to save again for study in Europe.

Immediately after my return to the city my morning visits to hateful Fourth Street began, to stand among hundreds of musicians in front of the M.M.P.U. waiting for jobs. Among these men was Theodore Hoch, a virtuoso trumpeter from Hamburg, who through lack of concert engagements had sought the position of leader at Koster and Bial's Music Hall. I was recommended to him and he engaged me for seven concerts a week, telling me to appear at rehearsal the following morning. I went, and to my despair found that I was to be a member of an orchestra of only nine men, including the pianist and leader. What a change from the old days when I had heard d'Angremont and Wilhelmj there!

Koster and Bial's was founded and managed by the firm of beer and wine importers of that name. It ran from Twenty-third Street clear to Twenty-fourth, near Sixth Avenue, very

wide and lofty, with one balcony running all around the building. On the floor were chairs and tables at which beers of all kinds were served; wine and liquor, too. In the early days it was a treat to go there to see and listen to the playing of Rudolf Bial's orchestra. The conductor was brought from Vienna by his cousin, the junior member of the firm. There were about fifty players, the best in the city. How I used to watch Hamm the concertmeister, and dream and hope that I, too, would occupy so honored a position! Bial was famous for his conducting of the Strauss waltzes, during which he took up his violin and played along with his men in quite the Viennese swing, we were told.

On the stage where Rudolf conducted his splendid symphony orchestra, where Wilhelmj stood so majestically playing the Beethoven concerto, now were groups of vaudeville performers waiting to have their numbers rehearsed. Hoch's English was very scant and uncertain and so he had his leader's platform made large enough for two chairs, one of which I occupied. His playing of the violin was like his English, and so it devolved on me to arrange most things with the performers, and to "vamp," with the help of that clever young pianist Fredericks, a dance or two that might be demanded at any moment from the stage during the performance.

At one time during the winter we were told that in two weeks the orchestra must turn itself into a brass band to take part in a Processional on the stage, in uniform, in company with the entire vaudeville troupe. I was given a B flat Alto,

and the music of the march; no teacher, no previous experience, nothing. The neighborhood in which we lived was made miserable for the next fortnight, but I did play the B flat Alto with every ounce of strength in me.

You ask me sometimes if I am shocked by this or that. How could I be, when at the age of eighteen I was playing for harlots and pimps? It isn't that I condemned these people for their life; but it somehow hurt me to feel that in the hall where a music-loving public had sat rapt in joy and admiration of Bial's fine programs there were now hard-faced, bitter-eyed women, and overdressed young fops swigging quarts of champagne in an atmosphere of cigar smoke, stale drinks and smut.

Back of the stage was the famous, or rather infamous, cork room. Its ceilings and walls were so closely studded with champagne corks glued together that no plaster was visible. Into this room I frequently had to go to receive or deliver music belonging to the vaudeville performers—usually in a high state of a champagne-induced hilarity. You see, these girls received a percentage on each bottle, and many held their jobs as performers mainly on the strength of their wine-selling talents.

Once in a while I was asked to take an engagement after my night work at Koster and Bial's. One of these happened to be a so-called French Ball, an annual affair of rather scandalous reputation, given at the Academy of Music. Another single engagement during the Koster and Bial era of a very different sort was at Klunder's Flower Show at the Metro-

politan Opera House. A large orchestra was seated in the gallery. Below was a marvelous and exotic garden in full bloom. I was excited and interested in playing good music under the leadership of young Frank Damrosch. He wore a pointed dark beard and mustache, and had a serious and kindly face. His father, Dr. Leopold Damrosch, had died only a short time before this, and the world mourned the passing of this inspiring leader and cultivated gentleman. Walter Damrosch, the younger son, aged twenty-three, took his place at once, and led the combined forces of the Metropolitan Opera House in the scheduled performances of the Wagner Music Dramas. He sent for his brother Frank—then distinguishing himself as a musical pioneer in Denver—to take the position of chorus-master.

I had seen Walter Damrosch on the street once—a handsome and aristocratic figure, with a cameo-like face in an aureole of wavy blond hair. Here, I thought, was the favored son of the gods, and I shriveled in comparison with this bright being. I had read and heard so much about him: how his family adored him; how he was helping his father in his musical affairs, sometimes at the organ, sometimes in the orchestra playing second violin; how he accompanied Wilhelmj, the violinist, on his tours. Strange that I had no premonition then of his future importance in my public and personal life!

It was in the early spring of that year that I left Koster and Bial's. Depressed—as usual—and physically spent by long hours of playing music I loathed in an environment that I

was ashamed of, I was finally persuaded by my parents to give up my position.

My next job was in the rather lugubrious company of wax-works—at the Eden Musée, no less, on Twenty-third Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. There I played for several months, watching a public as curious as the effigies they stared at. I was rather relieved when July came and I went again to the Sagamore on Lake George for the summer.

TWELVE

RICHARD MANSFIELD: ANTON SEIDL: AND MY FIRST RECITAL

THE following autumn I was engaged by Gustave Dannreuther of the Dannreuther Quartet to play one of the first violins in a double string quartet at Richard Mansfield's theatre, the Garrick, Thirty-fifth Street and Sixth Avenue. We always played beautiful music between the acts: excerpts from string quartets and parts of suites for strings. A string body of this kind, playing music of this quality, was new to the theatregoing public at that time, and was much appreciated. Mr. Mansfield always wanted the best of everything in his theatre and often suggested much of the entr'acte music to the players. The Green Room was a charming library under stage: books, framed pictures of many great actors, soft lights, soft rugs, and a big reading table. It was for me a most delightful engagement, and gave me an unusually intimate insight into the art of a masterly actor.

The bills changed nightly. *Beau Brummel*, *Prince Carl*, *A Parisian Romance*, a Russian play called, I think, *The Stu-*

dent, a somber tragedy, and Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.* The latter was truly an amazing performance of Mr. Mansfield's in its quick and miraculous change from the kindly and attractive Dr. Jekyll to the loathsome, gibbering, fiendish figure of the deformed Hyde. Mr. Dannreuther, our leader, always went below stage during this play, for he could not bear even to look at Hyde, so terribly did it affect him. At several performances fainting women in the audience were carried to the foyer of the theatre and fresh air, to be restored to consciousness.

While the season was a brilliant undertaking, Mr. Mansfield, responsible for the entire venture financially, found himself heavily in debt, and in the latter part of January closed the theatre. With his company he went on tour, leaving unpaid salaries behind him, with the promise, however, that he would settle in full in a short time. He punctiliously kept his word; exactly a month afterwards we all received the sums owing us for back salaries.

I was now out of a steady engagement and went every morning to Fourth Street to stand among the musicians in the hope of finding another theatre position. In the meantime I was sought out as a substitute for single performances, one of these being a double-star engagement at the Broadway Theatre of Booth and Salvini, the elder, in *Othello.* I was thrilled to be there, and would have substituted for nothing just for the privilege of being so close to these great men.

One sunny morning I followed Edwin Booth on his walk

down Fifth Avenue. I know it was sunny, for the rays of the sun glinted on Mr. Booth's silk hat. His face struck me as being the sad and beautiful reflection of a very sensitive soul. My heart went out to him that morning as I followed him for blocks, thinking at the same time of his tragic connection, through his brother, with the death of my adored Abraham Lincoln.

I was full of Lincoln in those days, as I am now. I read and pondered about a figure whose path I meant to follow. How could I, as an unknown fiddler, find the path?—that was the great problem. Could I, through music, achieve the broad and beautiful humanity of my idol? However, I had to go on with the thing in hand; and waited, and waited, and dreamed of a turn in the road to lead me to this desired goal.

Another single engagement was substituting for Franz Kaltenborn at the Metropolitan Opera House in a performance of *Faust*, which included the necessary attendance of one rehearsal. I was excited at the thought of playing under Walter Damrosch or Anton Seidl, but neither of these well-known men was in the conductor's chair. An assistant, undistinguished and unknown to me, directed the orchestra.

Experiences crowded in upon me, but not the kind that helped me along the path I so dimly sensed. My playing, while it seemed to interest my listeners, increased my already growing suspicion that they knew but little about great music, and were satisfied to be emotionally stirred only. (In spite of all the musical education and concert-going of today, I am afraid that people haven't changed much in that

way. They still will sit entranced at any facile violinist who sways on his feet and pulls his fiddle apart with false emotion.) At any rate, to increase their admiration I began to capitalize this quality in my playing, knowing rather vaguely that it would do little to advance me artistically and in the end would prove my undoing. To get away from all this, to be in a country where high artistic standards were the common heritage of all, was my ardent and continual wish.

I went on playing theatre engagements, one of which lasted for a month at the Criterion Theatre on Fulton Street in Brooklyn. I had to count on one and a half hours to reach it by street car; consequently, on matinee days, I remained in Brooklyn between the performances. This occurred twice a week. It wasn't very long before a lady, coming to the performance quite often, made herself known to me, and after the matinees invited me to drive with her in her landau drawn by two fine horses. She sometimes brought me to her father's house for dinner, and would then take me back to the theatre for the evening performance. I had to stand the gamut of the bewildered and amused stares of my brother musicians when I drove up to the stage entrance in such regal state.

After the engagement at the Criterion was ended, I took up again the daily visits on East Fourth Street, and was asked, to my gratification, to substitute at two Philharmonic concerts conducted by Anton Seidl. This great Wagnerian conductor came early to the rehearsals and would sit in the conductor's chair reading the newspaper, seemingly uncon-

scious of the arrival of eighty men and the tuning and preluding of most of them. He would never begin the rehearsal until he was told that all the men were assembled.

I confess I was disappointed at this first experience of mine in a symphony orchestra. Partly because Seidl, except for his magnificent and unparalleled conducting of Wagner, seemed so uninspired in his handling of Beethoven and the other great German classics. And partly because I felt deplorably out of place. The men were all Germans and the rehearsal was carried on in that tongue, which I, of course, understood, but spoke poorly. I believe I was one of the very few native-born members in that orchestra, and I felt myself on alien soil and an intruder among strangers. Of course I hoped that in some way I might be chosen some day as a regular member, but I hadn't realized how difficult it was for an outsider to become one.

It was a co-operative association, financed by the men, and supported mainly by the Philharmonic Association of laymembers who were mostly subscribers. It needed influence I did not possess to assure me of election. Besides, I only too sadly realized that I had not had the right experience to prepare me for such an exalted place.

I had so many ideas, dreams, and prayers for a better place in a living world—all of which led to confusion, and moments of despair alternating with senseless elation. The hourly barometer of my spirits fluctuated sharply, usually returning to the final basis of depression. The struggle seemed so often a hopeless one.

I had read many fine books on philosophy: Chinese and Greek, then Buddha, Mohammed, and, most beautiful of all, the teachings of Jesus Christ; and in Him I found what I needed, the proclamation of the world's purest and most everlasting spirit. It seemed to me that humanity, always perverse, had surrounded its adoration with cluttering ceremonial, standardized, formalized, to rob the individual of personal insight, and to reduce him to a very common denominator; and that ever-growing ritual would raise unsurmountable barriers against his own inner conviction. All the performances I had thus far heard had this quality exactly; and I dreamt of a freer outgiving of the message of which I felt music to be the marvelous tongue. I had never heard real music, just performances of it. Conductors and virtuosi impressed me with their command, their assurance, their perfection; but I yearned for the one who would give promise of a higher flight. If I had had their talent and their training, I am sure that I would have given this promise. These thoughts rest with me today: I hope for the release in others of something I could not achieve in my own playing.

About this time I learned that Mr. and Mrs. Ranger were going abroad in the spring and that I could cross with them. My mother had often said, "Why do you want to go abroad? You play better than anyone I've ever heard. Don't make yourself miserable by leaving home and the care you need." Mr. Ranger, on the other hand, advised at least a summer of study abroad. For such a plan I had not saved enough, but

Mr. Ranger suggested a recital at a public hall, saying that he would get many of his friends to buy seats. He engaged Hardman Hall on lower Fifth Avenue at a date far enough advanced for preparation and the sale of tickets. The date of my recital drew near and the program was decided on. It consisted of many short pieces and a trio by Arthur Foote. The pianist was an older man—Max Liebling—capable and experienced. The 'cellist was Arthur Severn, whom I had met at the Rangers'!

The gods were not kind at my debut. It was a cold, stormy night, and many of the people who bought tickets did not come. The rain descended in torrents, driven by vicious gusts of wind. Of course my parents and their friends were there, Mr. and Mrs. Ranger, and a few whom Mr. Ranger had brought with him. But I remember nothing about the performance except its aura of failure.

After the concert my father went home and the Rangers also departed. I learnt that the net profits of this adventure were something over a hundred dollars. Arthur Severn and I went to O'Neil's oyster saloon for something to eat, and to talk about the recital. Afterwards, in stepping out on to the pavement, I tripped on a coco-mat, turned my ankle, and fell headlong on the sidewalk. I awoke finding Severn bending over me and calling someone to bring whisky. I came to sufficiently to realize that I was soaked to the skin; it was pouring in torrents. My friend took me home in a cab. I assured him I was all right, and climbed with fiddle case in

hand to our rooms up two flights of stairs. Next morning the doctor bound up the sprained ankle. And I hobbled to work at the Bijou on a crutch for a fortnight, very sorry for myself indeed.

THIRTEEN

EUROPE—AND FIASCO

THE Rangers had set the day of their sailing and secured a first-class cabin for me on the Holland-America Line steamer "Veendam," a small, out-of-date and discarded unit formerly of the White Star Line, of about seven thousand tons. In fact, most of the steamers of the Dutch Line at that time were acquired in this way. The passage cost me fifty-five dollars.

The night before sailing was a difficult one for me, and my mother was heavy-hearted. Stoic that she was, she assumed a cheerfulness which, however, failed in its effectiveness with me. Had she begged me then to stay I would, with great happiness, have given up this long-cherished dream of mine. Relatives spent the evening with us; they sat round the walls of our little parlor, speechless between moments of utterance of dismal foreboding, while Mother plied them with food.

The voyage lasted for ten days, most of them stormy, and our little creaky ship labored through heavy seas. The son of the Single-Taxer Henry George was on board too, a de-

lightfully witty young man. He was much annoyed by the nightly visits of huge rats in his cabin, some of these running over his bed. Mr. Ranger's shoes were partly devoured by them.

We landed at Rotterdam and I parted from the Rangers in poignant regret, and started for Berlin by way of Cologne. At Berlin two cousins on my father's side met me and took me to their home near Alexander Platz. They were most kind and did all that they could to make me comfortable. The family consisted of my uncle, my two cousins, and their sister. Their flat was small and dark. They had no connection with or knowledge of the musical and artistic life of Berlin, and so I was at a loss how to begin my work. I did not know with whom to study or where to go for information.

I called then on the Wittkowskys, my mother's family, who lived very attractively in a much better part of the town. Their reception was not particularly cordial, but that I had expected. My mother never forgave them (my uncle and his wife) for their objection to my father as a husband for her. They were naturally not interested in the offspring of this union.

However, they advised my studying with Heinrich de Ahna, second violin of the Joachim Quartet, and professor of the Hochschule. He was a distinguished-looking old gentleman, in his youth an officer in the Austrian Army. I approached his house in fear and waited in a small anteroom, trembling, while I listened behind closed doors to the playing

of a brilliant pupil. My heart sank still more. Would he take me?

At last I was shown in, my thirty-five-dollar fiddle in hand. I played as well as my frayed nerves would allow. I was accepted and told to bring the Mendelssohn *Concerto* a week hence. Studying hours every day, homesick, without appetite for food (the preparation of which was strange to me), making myself but fairly understood, for I was ashamed of the little hybrid German I knew, I became weak, dispirited, and drowned in self-pity. It seemed at that time I was getting but little out of my lessons, and that the opportunity I had so longed for I seemed unable to make full use of.

In the meantime I had become acquainted with the family of my father's sister and her husband. There were two sons and two daughters and they begged me to come and live with them. They had a room for me and finally it was arranged that I should make my home with them in their nice apartment on the Stallscreiber Strasse. Here I felt more at home.

Shortly afterward I made a visit to another sister of my family in Wrièzen, a small village on the Oder. They gave me a cordial welcome. That night they invited the Burgomeister to hear me play, which I did without accompaniment. The ensuing enthusiasm of this dear old gentleman was immense. He said that he had never heard such marvelous playing. Starved for encouragement, I was very happy, for I thought here, only two hours away from the great

musical center of Europe, was a man who paid me such a high compliment. I went to bed that night knowing the happiest moments in months. Early the next morning I sought out the Burgomeister in his own home; he repeated what he had said the night before, but when I asked him about other violinists he might have heard, he said he had never had the opportunity of hearing anyone else!

Back in Berlin I heard performances at the Royal Opera House under Schuch and the young and most popular Karl Muck, whom I much admired; and at Kroll's Summer Garden, Marcella Sembrich in a beautiful presentation of Mozart's *Don Juan* with the captivating d'Andrade as guest in the title role. The large garden attached to Kroll's was an entrancing spot between the acts. Beautiful large trees lined the promenades, gaily lit by myriads of small lights, and here those of the audience who were not seated at tables eating and drinking would stroll back and forth. It was a very gay sight.

My lessons with de Ahna had ceased because my money had given out. I hadn't anticipated their high cost. My father sent me money afterwards but de Ahna had left for the country. Besides, I was too miserable and dispirited to continue even if the means were there. My teacher was noncommittal, perhaps because of the apparent lack of response that my ignorance of German caused.

One day I was overjoyed to receive a letter from home saying that my father was coming over to see his relatives and would take me back home with him. His business, in

which my elder brother was an active partner, had moved a year before to 432 Eighth Avenue where the Pennsylvania Station stands today. It had prospered and the neighboring store had now been added. The family lived on two upper floors.

My father came and I *was* glad to see him. It felt almost like being home again. I suspect that Mother urged his coming over to look after me, tempting him with the idea of visiting his relations. I knew, of course, that Father, too, had been anxious about me.

After a week or two of visits with my father in Berlin we started for German Poland, coming to Posen, and Gresen, and on to Father's birthplace, Povidz. We were traveling in an old and rickety droska and we came in sight of an old windmill, turning, just as it did when Father left this little village to marry Mother. He was deeply moved, I could see, and kept still. He had been away for thirty years. His father whom he adored had died in the meantime. There were a few of his contemporaries left and with these he spent hours, but something more than oceans had come between them, and the result of our visit was anything but gay.

A short drive to Wittkowo brought me to my mother's birthplace. A few of her friends still lived there. I loved to hear them tell of Mother's prettiness, her mischievous pranks. They said that Mother was the loveliest girl for miles around.

We sailed home in the "Fürst Bismarck" second cabin, an uneventful and dull voyage, but I was happy in the thought that every turn of the screw brought me nearer home. I

thought then that the summer had been a complete fiasco. Only when I was on home soil did I realize how the experience had benefited me. How often have I told you that nothing is really wasted! You can use the worst experiences as a means of measuring. And though they hurt me bitterly at the time, I hardly regret a single one of these false tracks that I stumbled along in my youth.

My first thought now was to seek occupation, and I was soon fortunate enough to be among the twenty-one men who were to play under Edward Mollenhauer at the Lyceum Theatre, Fourth Avenue between Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Streets, the site now occupied by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. The founder and manager was Steele Mackaye, formerly builder and manager of the beautiful Madison Square Theatre, where *Hazel Kirke* had played for three years continuously.

In the new Lyceum, Mr. Mackaye made an extraordinary innovation called the disappearing orchestra. Above the exquisite raw silk curtain made by Tiffany, in a balcony just over the proscenium, sat the orchestra. When lights were lowered the opulent silk curtain parted and showed, instead of the opening scene, an orchestra, including a Steinway concert grand piano. Elaborate Tiffany-glass-shaded lights, in this shallow but substantial room, gave sufficient illumination for us to read by. We all wore evening clothes; Mr. Mollenhauer standing up to conduct. At the close of the overture the curtain closed, opening after one minute on the first act of the play, which happened to be *Dakolor* with

Robert Mantell in the leading role. The orchestra with its heavy steel and wooden setting, its twenty-one men and piano, had disappeared!

For two weeks this seeming miracle was the talk of the town, and we, as well as everybody connected with the theatre, were begged not to unfold the secret. After a fortnight of conjectures on the part of the public, and in response to many requests, Mr. Mackaye promised to show how the "trick" was done. And so on the following Monday night, after the overture, in full sight of a large audience, this "room," the full width of the stage and as high as the proscenium, ascended, the bottom of it fitting or forming the top molding of a huge picture frame which the aperture now formed. During the tremendous applause we were stepping out into a room on the walls of which were lockers for our belongings, instruments, etc. The play was going on beneath; we were on the level of the "fly."

FOURTEEN

A FEW STEPS AHEAD

I HAD now begun to play with musicians of far better musical standards, one of whom, Carl Venth, invited me to play quartets at his home in Brooklyn. He was kindly disposed towards me, and helped me in a new and valuable experience. Another was Edward Mollenhauer, who had a fine reputation as a violin soloist. Then there was Nahan Franko, the first violin at the Lyceum Theatre, young, dashing and good-looking. He was also the outstanding violinist of that time. I was beginning to study with more intelligence and making rapid progress. I gained something from all these men, but decided not to choose a teacher until I had found the man I was looking for.

The Rangers were back home and I was happy to be often with them, playing and meeting interesting people. At tea one afternoon came beautiful, tall Julie Opp, the actress. After hearing me play she told me that a poetess had written a piece for her to recite which was accompanied in its entire length by a solo violin, and that she had been searching for a violinist who would be interested in doing it with her. We

rehearsed together, and did it at the Rangers' one Sunday night. Later on we appeared at one of Mr. Bagby's musicales at the Hotel Waldorf-Astoria, with great success. After the performance, to our great astonishment and delight, Madame Emma Calvé came backstage, enthusiastically praising our work. She asked me many questions in French, which Julie translated, and I was overcome with joy, though I fear I showed none of it. Julie must become a great actress and I a great violinist. I could see that in Julie, this beautiful creature, her prophecy might prove true; as for me, I had no such hopes, nor did I seem to desire it. I simply wanted to do justice to the music. Later it transpired that she wanted to send us both abroad to study. In my case, I never considered the proposition seriously, but I was indeed grateful to Madame Calvé for the encouragement. Julie Opp did go, however, to tour in England, and she did, as you know, become not only a famous actress but the wife of a famous actor—William Faversham.

My life was becoming more interesting, and I was comparatively happy. My sister was beginning to play well enough to accompany me, and our home life was enriched by much music, to the particular joy of our mother who dropped all her work and sat in gingham apron listening with rapt attention to our playing.

I had now joined the Aschenbrodel Verein (The Cinderella Club), and as a member was entitled to the benefit of seeking engagements in its own clubhouse on Fourth Street, near Second Avenue. No longer did I have to stand in the

street among the hundreds of players, a particular boon during the winter season when I shivered in the raw city winds. These men were among the better class of musician, and from them I heard many an interesting story about the two great conductors of that day, Theodore Thomas and Dr. Leopold Damrosch.

Theodore Thomas had been in New York since he was a young man; a violinist at first, who by sheer force of will and the power of gathering valuable and helpful friends about him, made a rapid and effective rise. He was persona grata with the press, and particularly so with the musical critics. His popular concerts at the Central Park Garden had been a great draw. Later on he became the conductor of the Philharmonic Society and the best leader of classical music in America.

At this time Dr. Damrosch, who had been brought over from Germany to conduct the Arion Men's Chorus, immediately made his artistic presence felt in founding the Symphony and the Oratorio Societies. Factional strife ensued among the followers of both conductors, and since Thomas was strongly entrenched, it was exceedingly difficult for Dr. Damrosch to keep alive his two societies, and many were the vicissitudes he passed through. Unconsciously (and largely I imagine through my mother's adoration of him) I became very sympathetic to Dr. Damrosch's personality.

I was now only twenty-five, but I felt that I was too old to be still doing what I had done for the past ten years, and that those years when I should have spent all my

time at study I was playing jobs, just jobs—and to what purpose? I never cared for the money I earned. I never carried any about with me; it was always handed over to Mother for safekeeping. (Again I must protest that this was not nobility of character; as your mother well knows, I loathe the presence of money on my person. It worries me.) I came to the realization, painful as it was, that unless something happened I should for the rest of my life rise no higher in my own estimation, for I instinctively knew what the word "artist" meant, and how far I was from being one.

When I thought of "the rest of my life" I never believed I would live much longer. For while I had no physical ailment, the trail of that scalding at five years of age led plainly to my lack of physical resistance at this time. I was always told, because I looked so wan and thin, that something ought to be done to make me look better. I did go to doctors, who found nothing wrong with me, but even this made me no less conscious of my appearance. Existence seemed more and more complicated, and even the warmth of friendships could not allay the agony of feeling that their faith in me was bound to bring them disappointment.

How could I let them down—my mother, Charlotte Hazard, John Douglas the Negro, the Rangers and their friends, all so sure of me and my future? I needed an artist musician friend, one whose advice I could follow. To my teachers I was only a pupil; no warm, human impulse went out from them to find anything worth while in me. I was much too shy to approach the great artists who came to New York. I was

ashamed of my little achievements, feeling inferior to everyone. I rarely went out now for just that reason, but stayed at home playing with my sister, practicing and reading.

One or two pupils now came to me, and on them I lavished all the care and the hope that what I could not achieve they must; and out of the experience of the past I drew for them the line of future effort. I felt, in fact, that I was a better teacher than player.

Whether I was capable of conducting or not, it had always been my dream; and I felt I had the necessary physical coordination and the musical impulse to seek such an opportunity, even a modest one. So when I was asked to direct a body of workers, amateur musicians meeting in a hall on Twenty-third Street, I did so for a month or two without, of course, remuneration. This was my first experience at reading the simple scores of very ordinary music, popular with the men. But they were all very incapable players, and did not have the leisure to practice their parts. I became discouraged at the lack of progress, and at my inability to achieve better results. What I like to remember is the fine and unselfish attitude of a few of the members and the friendships I made among them during our association.

One day, walking past the entrance of a small theatre on Broadway and Twenty-ninth Street, over Hanan's Shoe Store, I noticed extensive building operations going on at the entrance and in the body of the theatre situated over the store. The San Francisco Minstrels had formerly played here

for several seasons, the star performer being Lew Dockstader. I learned that Professor Herrman, the famous prestidigitator, had bought the theatre and was spending a large sum of money to make it a very attractive home of legitimate drama.

Here was a chance! I immediately wrote to Professor Herrman, asking him to consider me as a leader for the theatre. I very soon received a note from his manager, telling me to meet him. The result was all I could wish for. For I was engaged to furnish nine men and to be ready for the first rehearsal two weeks hence. Two days afterward, and just as I was at the stage of engaging the musicians, I was called again to the manager's office and told that he, the manager, was forced to cancel my engagement, that a relative of Herrman's who was financially interested in the new theatre had a nephew, a violinist, whom he insisted was to be engaged as leader. I was nearly broken-hearted over this setback. To ease the blow of my evident disappointment, the manager said that he would recommend my being engaged as first violin under the new leader. A few hours later the latter sent for me and I accepted with, I think, rather poor grace.

Professor Herrman opened the new theatre with his own performances which lasted some weeks, during which I learned many of the secrets of his "miracles," the marvelous accomplishment of his sleight-of-hand. It was, however, fatiguing and dispiriting work for us in the orchestra, for we had to play gallops, marches and waltzes almost continually.

After Herrman came the engagement with Miss Minnie Maddern, later Mrs. Fiske. At that time she was singing in light opera, and it was fun to play in her presence—she was so charming and so gay.

FIFTEEN

ENTER WALTER DAMROSCH

AFTER the holidays there came an English company playing a comedy, *All the Comforts of Home*, with William Faversham, a young, handsome Englishman who immediately made a noteworthy success. When we met beneath the stage I was delighted to feel that he liked me. After the first act of the play on the opening night I played a solo, standing up in the orchestra pit, and at the close was surprised to receive long and enthusiastic applause. Several of the men in the orchestra told me afterwards that Walter Damrosch, sitting in a box with some friends, applauded most heartily and seemed much interested. I had not seen him myself. The orchestra men said that Damrosch was engaging men for the permanent orchestra of the Symphony Society which his father had founded, and that Andrew Carnegie had built Carnegie Hall for Walter Damrosch whom he so admired. All this failed to excite me for it held no hope for me. I had borne too many disappointments. I went home feeling that I had caught a glimpse of a world, a star that had gleamed for an instant but whose

light was not meant for me. I told no one of the night's experience.

The next morning early, my father, through the speaking-tube from the store below, said excitedly that a Mr. Kayser, Mr. Damrosch's orchestra manager, had come to see me. In my wonderment I went down the three flights of stairs as if in a dream. Mr. Kayser said that Mr. Damrosch had heard me play at the theatre on the previous night and would like me to come to his office at the Metropolitan Opera House the following day, and that I was to bring my violin.

It is difficult to tell of the joy which came to our household. It was an extraordinary event. I alone was silent and troubled, for I felt certain that at a second hearing, which was also to be an examination, I should be found wanting and inefficient. Had I my greatest disappointment to bear? Would it not have been better never to have had such a chance, to have stayed in the little theatre rather than bear the danger of being discarded? Such a disgrace I could never endure. It was now or never. I could not eat or sleep until this issue was irrevocably determined. It was to be either the last disappointment or the means of salvation.

I went to Mr. Damrosch the following day. In the waiting-room while I unpacked my violin I listened to such playing on the piano that I was rooted to the spot in amazement at its freedom and beauty. As Mr. Kayser opened the door, the flood of sound greeted me with the picture of young Walter Damrosch at the piano. He turned to me with a smile and greeted me with kindliness, and asked a few questions.

Where had I studied? Who were my teachers? And where had I played? My answers were modest enough and the recital of my career anything but imposing.

I had brought much music, and he chose several pieces for me to play. He accompanied me, sitting easily at the piano watching me most of the time. At last he said, "Why did you not come to me before?" I said that I thought I wasn't good enough. "Kayser," he called through the open door, "make out a contract for David Mannes, as a first violin at thirty-five dollars a week and for the season of forty weeks." While this was being done Mr. Damrosch said that Carnegie Hall was to be dedicated in the spring and that Tschaikowsky was to conduct his symphony at the initial concert. Would I care to play?

To run home and show that marvelous sheet of paper signed "Walter Damrosch," with "David Mannes" underneath, the coupling of that famous name with mine that meant so little! My parents and my brothers saw at once the difference that contract would make in my life, and for the first time in all those years realized that, after all, I had done well to have kept on, that further development must surely ensue which would bring me to the top—whatever that meant. Mother's joy had an added flavor, the proving of her prophecies, the entire fulfillment of the dream. The son of the man she had adored had sought me out and placed me among the highest. She cared not about the salary or its conditions; her romance it was, and always continued to be.

SIXTEEN

I STUDY WITH HALIR

AGAINST the counsel of the family I decided to forego playing the opening concert under Tschaikowsky. I sought out Mr. Damrosch again for advice; since he had placed such trust in me it was only fitting, I thought, that I should do everything not to betray it by lack of further development. I told him I wished to sail immediately for Europe and begged for counsel as to whom I should go to for study, and would he give me a letter of introduction? He chose Carl Halir, famous soloist, a Bohemian by birth, the leader of his own string quartet and assistant to Joachim as professor of violin at the Hochschule. Mr. Damrosch gave me the letter written in warm and serious praise of my talent.

On my arrival in Berlin I immediately called upon Professor Halir, and in fear and deep humility approached the great man in his apartment. He greeted me with a disarming kindness, read the letter introducing me, and said that he had expected me. Mr. Damrosch had written directly to him of my coming.

David Mannes, Violinist

My lessons—I was to pay twenty marks for each—began the next day; and I was thrilled with my initial experience. I had two lessons weekly until the middle of July, when I followed the professor to Albeck, a bathing resort on the Baltic. My money was fast giving out, so I must be content with only one lesson a week. Every place where I inquired was too expensive. At last, in a poorer part of the little town away from the sea in a tiny house, I settled on a small room looking out on a paved court, with a water-pump in the middle of it—the only plumbing in the neighborhood. The whole place smelt of smoked fish; when I arrived to take possession I discovered that one side of the quadrangle forming this court was devoted to the business of drying and smoking small flounders. Everything became impregnated with this odor. I lived in it for six weeks. Ever since then the smell of smoked fish brings back to me that tiny room of mine with its sloping roof and the dormer-window. In standing up to practice I had to place myself under the peak of the roof in order to gain sufficient bow-room!

Two other lodgers occupied a room next mine. They were men, track-walkers on the railroad, rough-looking but good-natured fellows. I worked very hard, the professor had given me a stiff program to prepare, and I allowed myself little time for recreation. So much to accomplish in so short a time! One day everything would go swimmingly and I would be happy and content; the next day nothing would go at all. Exhaustion, gloomy thoughts, lack of confidence followed each other, merging into bitter self-condemnation.

Why was it that the same person, in the same attitude, of the same mental and physical combination should all at once lose his sound, and the co-ordination of brain and fingers? God knows I worked hard enough. It seemed at such times that I dropped back years in a development I had hoped would be a steady one onward. Then there would be short periods of great elation, when I could almost shout and jump about with the abandon and the joy of living. My music had come back to me; that was sufficient. I wanted nothing else.

I did not know until years afterwards that my method of practice had been completely wrong, and often wondered why, during the lessons, the teachers hadn't directed the proper mode and manner of study. To be told to practice slowly is manifestly not enough. The question involved is a serious one. I might have been saved much suffering and delay had I been so trained. However, I was to find out these things by myself with some profit to others who suffered from the same serious handicap.

My teacher seemed pleased with me, though, and encouraged and stimulated by the thought of sitting in that splendid orchestra on the stage of the new Carnegie Hall, I sailed for home and arrived one week before the date set for the first rehearsal.

SEVENTEEN

THE NEW YORK SYMPHONY

I WAS placed on the fifth stand with a young and attractive-looking violinist. We were among the very few native-born Americans in the orchestra, a large one at that time; eighty men, among whom were a number of world-famous soloists, Adolf Brodsky, the concertmaster, and Jules Conus, second concertmaster; and directly behind them, Jan Koert who had been second concertmaster of the Bilse Orchestra at Ostend (sitting next to Ysaye when both were young men) and Maitret, a young Premier Prix of the Paris Conservatoire. Then came two stands of four of the best-known violinists in New York at that time. Then Hoffman and myself, and back of us well-experienced violinists numbering in all fourteen first violins. Ottokar Novacek, the composer, a fascinating personality, led the violas with great distinction. Anton Hekking, brilliant artist and a most erratic man, sat at the head of the 'cellists. With the exception of the Boston Orchestra, then conducted by Arthur Nikisch, the New York Symphony Orchestra was the finest orchestra in the country, and the best by far

of any symphonic band New York had ever possessed for its own. The personnel in the woodwind and brass compared most favorably in excellence with the string body.

We were all seated when Mr. Damrosch punctually ascended the conductor's platform, making a short speech in finest German—that being the orchestra tongue in those days —at the end of which he told us we were to rehearse our first program, the principal number of which was the Fifth Symphony of Beethoven.

Although I had never played a symphony except those by Haydn, excerpts of which, arranged for piano and violin, I had given at my summer hotel engagements, I did rather well with Beethoven, for my previous experience had helped me very much in reading at sight. But as the rehearsals went on and included parts of the Wagner music dramas, such as the *Walkueren Ritt,* Wotan's *Abschied and Feuerzauber,* I became hopelessly confused and practically useless. Why my helplessness wasn't discovered I could not imagine; to my relief even my companion did not seem to notice my bewilderment. Everyone among the first violins seemed to play those fearful passages in the *Ride of the Valkyries* and the *Magic Fire Music* with ease and competence. We played more and more Wagner, and the more we played the more I became depressed. I took my parts home. It was impossible to play the passages at the speed the conductor's baton demanded. In desperation I approached one of the older men. "I simply can't do those runs and arpeggios," I confessed.

He laughed and said that no one was able to play all the

notes, that Wagner insisted always on having eighteen violins and the other strings in proportion to the orchestra; that the individual players, endeavoring to do the impossible, did achieve, with experience, only approximately the technique; but that somehow with that number of violins the passages sounded perfectly, both to the conductor and audience. Naturally the players must be experienced. I sat next him at one rehearsal, and profiting by his coaching I did better and better, till at last all sense of confusion passed in the playing of the music.

I existed solely for my orchestral experiences, becoming more and more acquainted with the great masters, Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann and Brahms. I studied my parts, went early to rehearsals, and with the conductor's score on my stand I started reading them, acquainting and familiarizing myself with the instrumentation, realizing with wonder the vast network of that marvelous instrument, the symphonic orchestra. I bought the sonatas of Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms and with my sister tried to play them. Little by little I began to understand the music, not only the violin parts but the unity of both instruments.

EIGHTEEN

YOUNG PADEREWSKI: ORCHESTRA TOURS

MANY great soloists appeared with our orchestra, the most distinguished of whom was Paderewski, then in his early thirties. His success was instantaneous and immense. The force of his personality created an electric atmosphere in the orchestra, infusing everyone in it, including our conductor, with an enthusiasm that made the music seem to glow with miraculous light.

Never had I experienced such unanimity in a single glorious purpose. Especially in the Schumann concerto and in the *Emperor* concerto of Beethoven did I realize the power of a human utterance that approached, so it appeared to me, divine speech. Beethoven stood revealed as a prophet. The milestone of perfect technical instrumental performance had been passed and music, relieved of its burden and effort, soared on high. What I had simply hoped and prayed for had come to pass: the instrument was forgotten, a great interpreter had revealed the master.

I knew now why I adored music and not the instrument,

and why it was difficult for me to attain technical mastery. I wanted the end at once and was too impatient of slow and careful practice, so I revised my work accordingly.

A few days before Christmas we held our first *Messiah* rehearsal with Frank Damrosch as conductor. I had not met him since I had played under him at the Klunder Flower Show at the Metropolitan Opera House. The chorus assembled, and I was stirred by its sound. To hear the greatest of all dramas—the New Testament I had read and read—set in perfect musical form, was to me a religious experience. The Oratorio seemed to place me as an actor in its tragic events, and held me fast until its final denouement, as if the story were one of my own time and place. And I forgot that I was sitting in the orchestra with the riotous mob of the story in full dress and the women in it in the variegated colors of evening dress.

After this, and during every week, the orchestra made several short tours to nearby cities—Boston, Hartford, New Haven, Philadelphia and Washington—returning to New York in time to play our weekly concerts. Waiting for midnight trains at the station, the men would often sing, and very well too, many old German songs, much to the amusement of station employees and other waiting travelers. Maitret led them with his excellent high tenor. Often Mr. Damrosch joined in in his piercing voice. (You know how it carries in any hall or room!)

Some of these out-of-town concerts were with the Oratorio Society in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Bach's *St. Mat-*

thew's Passion. Altogether this winter had been another tremendous awakening for me, and emotionally so great a tax that I scarcely ate, and grew thinner and more emaciated every day. I became really alarmed and prayed for strength to be able to keep on at what seemed to be a tremendous pace.

NINETEEN

I MOVE UP: HEAR YSAYE: AND SEE A CERTAIN ALTO'S FACE

At an Adirondacks engagement the summer before I had met a charming family, the I. Emerson Palmers of Middletown, Connecticut. Often I would go for a few days' rest to their lovely home, and in that kindly atmosphere recuperate. Mr. and Mrs. Palmer were great horse-lovers and under the guidance of a groom I learned to ride their beautiful Arabian animals. Of course on these visits I always brought my violin with me, and played to Mrs. Palmer's accompaniments for their guests, and on Sunday mornings in church during the Offertory, besides giving young Townsend Palmer lessons.

In the summertime Mr. Palmer always sent his horses to graze on a farm near the tiny city of Vergennes in Vermont. He often spoke of that State and of the particular charm of Vergennes near Lake Champlain. I decided then to spend the summer there, to work out many problems which the winter season had presented and which I must, so I thought, solve by myself.

The hotel at Vergennes was too far from the lake, so I settled on a room at Basin Harbor, on the very shores of Champlain. It was ideal. Besides an extra room to practice in, I had the privilege of using a rowboat and swimming—all the opportunities for physical exercise which I needed. In time I made friends with the people of the countryside, who treated me always with deference, for it was noised about that I was a great violinist! For Vermont I suppose I was at that time, and it did me no harm to be so regarded.

Among the visitors to Basin Harbor were Mr. and Mrs. Van Deusen coming in their small steam yacht, spending days, sometimes weeks, anchored in the small harbor at my door. Mrs. Van Deusen insisted that I should play a concert in Vergennes and one in Burlington, for in both places she had many friends. I sent for my sister and with her played both concerts, making many friends and enough money to pay the extra expense of having Madeleine spend some weeks with me. The summer passed happily and I grew physically much stronger.

The next winter was a repetition of the preceding one in actual work, and with the gain in assurance I felt more and more that I was a worth-while factor in the performance of the orchestra. I had been moved up to the fourth stand. The learning of new works, lengthening tours to the West, to the Chicago Exposition, hearing the most famous artists who played with us, opened life to me in greater and greater wonder. I had now bought a much better violin, a Vuillaume, costing four hundred dollars.

The following summer was spent in New York City, where in Madison Square Garden the orchestra under Mr. Damrosch gave popular concerts. The audiences were comparatively small, the acoustics as bad as they could be, and the venture was neither wise nor successful. Jules Conus was concertmaster, Brodsky refusing to play this type of concert. Both he and Hekking had gone abroad for the summer to spend that time with their families: a fact which I, in my excess of devotion to Mr. Damrosch, thought nothing short of traitorous!

I was made unhappy by the critical attitude of the press. The critics, most of them, in their loyalty to Theodore Thomas during the years of rivalry between Thomas and the elder Damrosch, brought their poisoned pens to bear on every performance conducted by the younger Damrosch. Courageously and with dogged persistence he kept on, and became stronger in spite of the press bias. Feeling very bitter about it I wondered at the dignity and reserve of so young a man, standing alone, bearing such a huge responsibility with such grace. The ordinary mob criticized him for this very reserve, and called him cold and conceited. I remember him in those years with gratitude and admiration, for I learned many a lesson from him outside the realm of music.

It was about this time that under the auspices and protection of a very wealthy and charming person, his great friend Miss May Callender, an amateur singer and music-lover, Mr. Damrosch gave the first of his famous Wagner lectures. Seated at the piano, playing and speaking with rare charm,

he did more for the true understanding of these great music dramas than anyone in America. Miss Callender was also vice-president of the Symphony Society, Andrew Carnegie being its president. Shortly before that our young conductor married Margaret Blaine, the daughter of James G. Blaine, Secretary of State in President Harrison's Cabinet. I remember, after a concert in Washington, seeing the Secretary of State walking off arm in arm with Mr. Damrosch. I was extremely proud of this distinguished connection of our conductor.

The following summer was spent with the orchestra at Willow Grove where we played two concerts a day, including Sundays, to large audiences. The grove was built and financed by a Philadelphia trolley syndicate to stimulate traffic for their newly built lines running out of Philadelphia. Neither Brodsky nor Hekking came back for the following winter season, nor did Novacek, the solo viola. Conus became concertmaster, and Jan Koert took Novacek's place as first viola. I was moved up to third place at the second stand and sat behind Conus. On tour Conus became ill and the second concertmaster took his place: an excellent artist, but suffering frightfully from nerves. He made wrong entrances, and in the incidental solo became inaudible. His bow shook so in the playing of Handel's *Largo* and in Saint-Saens' *Dance Macabre* that we feared he might actually faint with fright. The next night in Allentown, Pennsylvania, I was asked to take the first chair, to my utter consternation! I was a concertmaster if only for one night! But I had always looked

forward to such an opportunity and felt prepared. I was much applauded after the obbligati, and Mr. Damrosch seemed pleased.

The following Sunday night in New York, Conus being still confined to his room, I again took his place. Marsick, the distinguished French violinist, was the soloist. Near the end of the program Mr. Damrosch interpolated an extra number, the well-worn *Largo* of Handel. I played it, of course. It was wonderful to hear my violin in that great hall packed to the walls. It seemed out of all proportion, especially after the finished playing of Marsick, for my little effort to receive such thunderous applause. I rose and bowed again and again, really quite ashamed that I gave so little and received so much.

At the Oratorio rehearsals and concerts I noticed among the altos the face of a young, beautiful and enthusiastic woman. I was strangely attracted by her regular and aristocratic features. She rarely looked at her score, her attention being directed instantly and always devotedly to the conductor's face. Singing with assurance born of thorough knowledge of the music, she seemed to stand apart from the others. I looked forward to every Oratorio rehearsal and was disappointed when she was absent.

The months went by, concert following concert. I was becoming a routineer so far as orchestral playing was concerned, and by myself studied much solo music, for there seemed no one with whom I wanted to work.

The event of the winter was the coming of the greatest

of all living violinists, Eugene Ysaye. At the rehearsal of the *B flat concerto* of Saint-Saens, and during his first concert here, I realized that this man was the master I had waited for. Like Paderewski, the individual spoke. Here indeed was the poet. His passages played at lightning speed always had expressive meaning, and the flow of his bow in the exquisite nuances moved on like smooth water, never static, always sure in direction. He made a sensational success and was the talk of the town.

I had made up my mind that some day I would beg him to teach me, for how could anyone be satisfied with less? It was the revelation that I had always prayed for. This was, to me, the way music ought to sound: not bar after bar in meticulous man-made time, but the rhythm of changing form. It was the great poetry in the language of sound. The real prophet had come and his vision was to remain mine forever.

Eugene Ysaye was then in the prime of his manhood, about forty years of age. Ysaye and Paderewski—these were my ideals. Neither of them could be a teacher in the ordinary sense; the only way to learn from them was to listen, to share the music that flowed beneath their magic fingers, to wonder at the ineffable beauty of their vision. Theirs was not the expression of technique but the technique of expression.

A fortunate circumstance now came to pass which gave me pleasure and encouragement. Mr. Wade Chance, assistant manager of Carnegie Hall, sent for me one evening asking me to bring my violin. On arriving I was introduced to two

young men, Howard Brockway, pianist and composer, and Ralph Pulitzer, son of the famous journalist and editor of the New York *World*. I was at once attracted to the bright and charming personality of Brockway, who appeared to be of my own age. Brockway was to play his own sonata that evening with the violinist Louis von Gaertner, pupil of Joachim. Von Gaertner at the eleventh hour had sent word it was impossible for him to play. Thereupon Mr. Chance, who had noticed me in the orchestra and had come backstage on that memorable Sunday night concert when I appeared as temporary concertmaster, felt that I might do as von Gaertner's substitute. I read the sonata much to the apparent pleasure of Mr. Brockway, and then and there began a friendship that has lasted these many years. And shortly afterwards we planned to play together in public the following season.

TWENTY

ADVENTURE IN CANADA

DURING the last few years I had not lost sight of the Rangers, and played very often with Mr. Ranger on Sunday nights at his studio, where many of his artist friends continued to gather to talk pictures and eat the very good food laid out for them. Mr. Ranger told me that he had found the ideal place to work in the summer, a French habitant village at Berthier-en-haut, now called Berthierville, forty-five miles downstream on the St. Lawrence from Montreal.

I decided to go with Mr. and Mrs. Ranger since I must have an inexpensive summer. I had made a firm resolve to save so that I might make another journey to Europe for study.

We lived on the main street running parallel to the river at a tiny native hotel, kept by a French habitant, for the sum of five dollars a week. The accommodations were primitive and the food was very poor. We hadn't been there a week when Monsieur St. Cyr, the hotelkeeper, came to Mr. Ranger and said that a wonderful French cook had come to him ask-

ing for employment. Could he add a small weekly sum to our little bills in order to pay the higher wages of such a culinary artist? The cook was engaged, and from then on every meal became an alluring adventure.

Mr. Ranger had hired a "studio," an old tumbledown shack partly supported on piles in the river's bed, which looked dangerously ready to slide into the river at any moment. It cost us five dollars a month. It had not been occupied for years. We spent days cleaning it up, throwing the rubbish into the river from the window. Mr. Ranger painted on the bottom floor, I practiced over his head on the floor above.

We made the acquaintance of a Swiss family who conducted a private French school for girls. They were Mother Clements, her two daughters, a son, and her sister, Miss Amaron, who at the present time is still living at Berthierville. Until recent years I have had a glimpse of that lovely old face on her yearly trips south to escape the rigor of a Canadian winter. Never had anyone such dear, devoted friends as they became to me. (I blush to say that because my black hair was rather long and naturally wavy, they persisted in calling me "Davy Wavy.") We often played there evenings, the music always being accompanied by shrieks of delight from these sensitive and emotional ladies.

It is such a sweet memory to me! A Du Maurier might sketch the charm of that old home with its air of illusion; a less sensitive pen would fail utterly.

At the end of August we all went to Quebec to visit our old friends the Fairchilds, who lived seven miles up

the river, high above the stream on the Plains of Abraham at Cap Rouge. In the evenings I played. One of these nights young Mr. James Cowie, surveyor for the Canadian government, appeared. He adored music and we became friends. And one day at Cap Rouge I spent on board the government steamer of which he was chief, employed in charting the floor of the great river. Another day we visited the huge rafts from the Upper Ottawa lying in the cove below, brought there for sale. We ate with the crew, who showed us their sleeping quarters—large dog-houses into which they went feet first, lying with their heads in the open.

Fifteen years afterwards—when James Cowie was Surveyor General of Quebec—we met in Montreal. He took from his wallet the frayed fragment of a violin E string. He told me that on the first night he heard me play he picked up from the floor in the Fairchild home a broken violin string that I had thrown aside.

The climax of our visit was a hunting- and fishing-trip to the Lakes of Tantary, north of Quebec and quite in the forested wilderness. Stopping at Valcartier, the old Fairchild home, to assemble the camping outfit, we drove north in a large buckboard—Mr. Fairchild, his father, Mr. Ranger and myself—to the guides' home, together with the brothers Murphy, half-breed Indian guides. They seemed to be more Irish than Indian, and had trapped for fur since their youth from Quebec to Lake St. John. Both had settled in the edge of the forest, and had married Irish girls. It was the most primitive living, but the children seemed healthy and happy.

We had their midday meal with them—such good homely fare; but we had to leave soon after in order to reach camp before nightfall. So, with grumbling, we submitted to being loaded with our packs and set out. Of the three days in camp it rained half the time, but the huge fire was kept roaring in front of our tent door. We caught more than enough trout, which were broiled and served on birchbark.

It was a new and delightful experience for me, not the least of which was the companionship of these stalwart and forest-wise guides. One of them, in chopping kindling wood the previous winter, partly severed two fingers of his left hand. He looked at his injured hand, quickly judged that those fingers could never be whole or useful again, and calmly finished the job with his hatchet, losing the fingers. He told this incident as simply as if he had been whittling a stick. With but the most meager means at their command, with so little of the world's goods, they both gave me presents of various quaint things of their own making. I loved these simple and warm-hearted men and was sad at leaving them. They taught me more in those three days than they realized.

Back at Cap Rouge I soon made the acquaintance of the little French curé in the village. (When in later years I met Pablo Casals I remembered this delightful priest; they resembled each other so closely.) "Monsieur le Curé" played on the harmonium, accompanying me in many a hymn and simple melody. He asked me to come with him and play for the nuns at the Convent, in the chapel, which I did.

Behind a tall screen, invisible, were the nuns. Presently, timidly at first, they sang with us in their fresh young voices. I was moved by this experience, and vaguely stirred by these unseen singers who had to live immured and separated from the bright world outside. I never saw the curé again, but he too lives in memory as one of the sweetest souls I have ever known. My violin, as usual, was the open sesame that had unlocked so many doors and allowed me to see vistas of haunting beauty.

TWENTY-ONE

MY FIRST STRIKE

I RETURNED to New York in time for the rehearsals, to find that there had been many changes. Brodsky had been appointed head of the College of Music in Birmingham, England. Jules Conus had gone back to St. Petersburg in order to devote himself to composition. Novacek had also returned home. Both he and Hekking found orchestra-playing irksome. Hekking was to tour Europe as soloist.

During the summer in Europe Mr. Damrosch had engaged Anton Hegner, the Scandinavian 'cellist, to take Hekking's place. Mr. Hegner came to New York a few weeks after the opening of the season. According to the by-laws of the Musical Union, a player wishing to join the union had to prove that he had been six months in the country. This was absolutely necessary before he could take a place in a professional organization. Mr. Damrosch knew this but hoped for a special dispensation allowing Hegner to play with us. This the union refused to give, and warned the members of our orchestra that we were liable to a fine for playing a con-

cert with Mr. Hegner in the orchestra, and, at a repetition of this "offense," to expulsion from the union. This latter penalty made it impossible for any orchestral player so proscribed to earn his living in the United States.

Mr. Damrosch insisted that Mr. Hegner should play at the next Sunday concert. The union refused to give permission. The evening of the concert came. When we were seated Mr. Hegner took his place. Not a sign of disturbance appeared, but the men looked pale and worried. The opening number was the overture to *Phèdre*, by Massenet, the first bars of which are played by the brass. Mr. Damrosch's stick descended. Not a sound. The tension was frightening. The conductor pleaded with the men, begging them to help him in what he considered a rightful cause. At such a moment one forgot the audience, what they felt or what they were doing about it all. I do remember hearing shouts of "Shame," "Shame," and a few of us felt like despised and hopelessly mean criminals. The baton again descended. Silence and absolute stillness. Mr. Damrosch turned to the audience, telling them that he and they were the victims of a strike, that they would have the money refunded. He begged them to leave.

Mr. Damrosch rushed off the stage. A few of us followed him to his room, to assure him of our loyalty. We said we would play for him under any conditions, even if it meant our being put out of the union. Coming to the door of his room we stepped in to find him weeping bitterly.

The schedule of concerts nevertheless had to be followed,

and of course without Mr. Hegner for some time. I believe that the union made some compromise finally, and Hegner played with us as a member of the union for a season or two.

Jan Koert was moved from first viola to the concertmaster's seat and I was to be tried out as second concertmaster. Mr. Damrosch had given up his work as conductor of the Oratorio Society, placing his brother Frank in his stead.

The work of the orchestra went on. As second concertmaster I now felt more at ease and enjoyed immensely the responsibility of that position. Jan Koert was very kind and helpful. As concertmaster he proved himself an experienced leader of the first violins, though he was never a distinguished player. It is comparatively easy to sit next to such a man and play with confidence. At one rehearsal Koert was absent and naturally I was asked to take his place. We were reading some new excerpts of Mr. Damrosch's arrangement from the *Gotterdammerung*, and, being very nervous, sitting in such a responsible place, I made a poor showing and was relieved at the return of the concertmaster at the next rehearsal. Another lesson. This must not happen again. After that I made sure ahead of time of what was planned for rehearsal.

TWENTY-TWO

ENTER CLARA DAMROSCH

NEAR Christmas time the orchestra rehearsed with the Oratorio Society. I looked forward to these rehearsals with a new interest, for I anticipated seeing the attractive alto in the chorus again. She was there; I saw Jan Koert talking to her before the rehearsal. I asked him when we were seated together who the lady was. "Didn't you know that she is Clara Damrosch, sister of Walter and Frank?" he said. It was some time afterwards, meeting a young painter at the Rangers' and hearing him tell someone that he knew Miss Damrosch, that I found the way of approach to her. I called on Mr. Orrin Parsons, the young painter, and asked him if he could present me to Miss Damrosch. He said he would with pleasure. He was meeting her that very day, they both belonged to a sketching class (for she painted, too) and he would ask permission to bring me to see her.

Late one afternoon we went to her mother's apartment, at 327 Amsterdam Avenue, and I was presented to Mrs. Damrosch and her sister, Miss von Heimburg. To say that

I was appalled and sat on the edge of a three-cornered chair well-nigh speechless is no exaggeration. I shall always remember that curiously shaped three-cornered chair.

To think that I was face to face with the widow of Leopold Damrosch, the mother of Walter and Frank and of the girl I had admired in the Oratorio Chorus—this overpowered me.

Mrs. Damrosch impressed me as a strong and majestic personality. I saw now that her son Walter resembled her greatly—the same pure, strong features, as if chiseled out of marble. Her reception of me was kindly but rather chillingly impersonal, whereas on the other hand the charm and lovely smile of her beautiful sister, Miss von Heimburg, and her helpful remarks about seeing me in the orchestra and noticing with pleasure the enthusiasm of my attitude to the conductor's beat, made me feel a trifle easier. She told me that her niece was expected home soon; she taught the piano, I learned, and was very much occupied with her work nearly every day in the week. I wanted to see her so much, and I wanted so much to run away before she arrived that I was truly miserable! At last she arrived, with a spring of step and the joy of living in her face, as if she had been having lots of fun instead of teaching four or five hours that day, or perhaps more.

That Miss Damrosch was very much amused at my coming, at my diffidence and embarrassment, was evident. However, "you must come and play with me some time," she said. I had been so conscious of myself in this exciting hour

that I never noticed Mr. Parsons' departure some time before my own.

I lost no time in taking advantage of Miss Damrosch's invitation to play sonatas with her. I felt that my playing did not commend itself or myself to her. She seemed sure of her instrument and knew the score perfectly, while I felt miserably inadequate and undeveloped. She played often with Geraldine Morgan, her friend, a pupil of Joachim. In comparison my playing must have seemed labored and crude. Miss Morgan was a finished performer, a fine musician, and had come over with Joachim's high endorsement and protection. It was said that she was his favorite pupil at that time.

At all events I felt a new ambition, a new goal, far off but in sight. I had come in personal contact with the family I had revered all those years and was stirred by an emotion I had never had before. Was it Miss Damrosch who made all that difference?

I had always felt the responsibility for my sister's education. I wanted her to experience some of the life I was leading. She was the only one at home to whom I could talk on musical matters. I wanted her to have the guidance and influence of just such a personality as that of Miss Damrosch, whom I asked to teach her. The arrangements were made and I paid for the lessons by checks, for I had now a modest bank account. My sister adored her teacher, every lesson becoming an event for me also, for it meant hearing from

Madeleine interesting and intriguing details about the one who occupied my thoughts persistently.

I went to the Oratorio rehearsals and concerts with increased anticipation and felt myself favored when I could bow to that alto and have it acknowledged with such a charming smile. What was it all leading to? I was conscious of a new worry and a new and tremendous responsibility. Was I never to know peace or tranquillity? How could I possibly measure up to that family of tradition and breeding? I knew hours and days of hopelessness, keenly realizing the lack of education and my own ill-directed study, brooding constantly on years misspent in ignorance and the lack of preparation for a calling that required the best that only a well-trained man could give. But to create a past as well as a future was humanly impossible. Then Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln, came to my assistance. He created greatness out of nothing. I could only try. I loved reading about him again. It was a great and invigorating help. His picture was always with me, his complete inner and outer portrait.

Self-centered though I was, my interests were too broad to make a good specialist. Medicine, mechanics, philosophy, literature, and above all a keen human interest, all jumbled up in kaleidoscopic chaos without the fixation of a definite pattern, confused me, weakened all my convictions except an unshakable faith in the progress of mankind in which I hoped so devoutly I might help. I am sure that Clara Damrosch was the starting point of a new phase in my existence.

TWENTY-THREE

THE BIRTH OF THE SETTLEMENT

I now became very busy, for in addition to my regular work I was to have pupils. What I did not know was that a dream-fulfillment was soon to be mine.

I had been asked to conduct a children's orchestra at the home of Mrs. Clarence C. Rice at 81 Irving Place. In a few months this little string orchestra grew to the number of sixteen players, boys and girls, the eldest of whom were fourteen years of age. It was hard work, for not only were the rehearsals fatiguing, but I practiced with each child individually. In time most of them became my pupils; and in their lessons were incorporated the reading, bowing and fingering of their parts in the orchestra. For about six years this orchestra rehearsed weekly in the dining-room at Dr. Rice's. At these rehearsals there were always visitors, parents and friends of the players, and soon little concerts followed at charming houses. These won for themselves most favorable comment.

One day an older sister of one of these little violinists, Miss

Florence Wardwell, asked me to accompany her to a music class, situated in a dingy house on Rivington Street on the lower East Side. There I met Miss Wagner, a young woman who had started teaching the children in this most sordid and filthy neighborhood. Some of these children paid ten cents for their lessons on either the piano or violin. This work started in the basement of a church and no rental was asked as it was considered a charitable venture. The little school could not possibly support itself on its necessarily low fees, and a small committee was formed to seek funds to cover the deficit.

I immediately saw wonderful opportunities to put into actual practice a dream I had had ever since my years at public school, when we schoolboys had enthusiastically responded to the call of "Professor" Benjamin, whose "free" violin lessons proved such a depressing and sordid commercial venture. At that time I had promised myself that some day I would send out such a call, based on the desire to extend to poor children the means of learning music through the instrument of their choice in surroundings that were beautiful and an environment that would be stimulating. I would discourage mediocre professionalism and teach music as a means to spiritual enlightenment.

Here in Miss Wagner's small class of children, in its enthusiastic committee, lay the beginnings of such a grand adventure.

I began teaching a small class of little violin players, most of them without musical experience, and very few of them

showing any particular talent. What they all had, however, was enthusiasm and the capacity for work. Donations of sheet music and violins were sought and found, but never in sufficient quantity to meet the increasing demands of new applicants for lessons. Very often there existed only one violin for two or three pupils. Besides Miss Wagner, who taught both violin and piano and gave all her time and strength for a small salary, guaranteed by the committee, there were two volunteer teachers who generously devoted several hours a week to the cause. Among these volunteer teachers was Angela Diller.

Small ensemble groups were formed and out of these an orchestra of strings and one piano. The piano was eliminated shortly, and a real string orchestra, with one viola and one 'cello, started its notable career.

I also took charge of this body of youngsters at the College Settlement nearby in Rivington Street, meeting every Sunday morning at ten and rehearsing until half-past twelve. I interested many of my friends and went about telling them to come and see what we were doing, feeling sure of their appreciation and financial help. The school grew rapidly, and on account of our cramped quarters and lack of instruments a waiting list was forming. The lesson fees were then raised to twenty-five cents, making it necessary to secure a scholarship fund so that no child should be refused entrance into the school for lack of payment. Most of the children were Russian Jews. Their parents, reading no other language

than Yiddish, supported their families by working in sweatshops of the worst kind.

I visited the homes of some of my pupils to find appalling living conditions and lack of nourishing food. Much illness was due to the absence of simple hygienic safeguards, and easily preventable had there not been such deep ignorance and superstition.

But it was Miss Wagner who, besides teaching, gave her entire life to this work, while I, on account of my busy life elsewhere, could only devote hours where I wanted to give days. There was little time outside my position in the Symphony Orchestra, with four or five rehearsals a week and as many concerts including tours; and I was now a busy teacher as well as conducting the children's orchestra at Mrs. Rice's.

I tried not to lose sight of my friends, the Rangers; and then Brockway and I often played together at various houses, chief of which was the Trevor Parks' on Madison Avenue on Sunday nights. Mrs. Park was a talented and attractive young woman, an excellent violinist and pianist. At her house one always met many of the visiting artists and musicians.

TWENTY-FOUR

THE DAMROSCH DYNASTY

WALTER DAMROSCH had now started giving Wagner concerts with orchestra and singers in excerpts from all the music dramas. They were most successful. With this response from the public (the critics still seemed bent on hounding him in every venture) he planned an opera season for the following winter, giving German opera in German with artists brought from Europe. This seemed to everyone a most hazardous venture, and financial backing because of this was not to be secured. I heard later that he alone assumed this tremendous burden, thereby putting his entire resources, it seemed most surely, in jeopardy. Later on we shall see how everyone but Walter Damrosch was mistaken.

At every concert I covertly looked for the appearance of the conductor's sister in the box always reserved for the family, and was invariably rewarded, for besides Mrs. Damrosch and her sister, Miss von Heimburg, there was the face I was looking for.

Then very often at Reisenweber's beer restaurant, on Eighth Avenue and Fifty-sixth Street, at a distant table I

would sit watching this family group, with the conductor himself, who seemed always in the best of spirits, his high and piercing voice clearly audible to everyone in the place. I never left the restaurant while they were there. Walter Damrosch's high good humor was electric and seemed to pervade the establishment. He was at that time my hero without question.

As the season drew to a close I was determined to spend the summer abroad and study with my teacher, Halir, again. My bank account was then sufficient to make this possible, and I began to make plans. Brockway was going to Berlin in order to be with his teacher Mr. O. B. Boise, and it was arranged that we should sail together. This was decided on the evening when we gave our joint recital at Mrs. Spencer Trask's house in which I again played my friend's sonata with him. (Mrs. Trask, in flowing white, sat on a raised dais at the end of the salon, receiving her guests in something like regal state.) But, shortly after, when talking to Frank Damrosch after an Oratorio concert he told me that he and his wife, his aunt and his sister Clara were sailing in the late spring on the "Friedrich der Grosse" of the Hamburg-American Line. I went the next day to the steamship office and engaged passage on the same steamer. Gone was the idea of crossing with Howard Brockway. I had the chance to see Clara Damrosch at close quarters for ten days!

A few weeks of the season still remained, and an outstanding and unusual concert took place—a choral concert by the People's Choral Union, assisted by our orchestra.

This organization was founded by Frank Damrosch and began with a small body of devoted singers and lovers of music among hard-working wage-earners. Such was its appeal to these people that applicants came by the hundreds and it became necessary to form various branches. Rehearsals cost the members only ten cents, this money being used to defray the cost of music. To this noble work Mr. Damrosch dedicated his Sunday afternoons for over twenty years without a cent of remuneration. Everybody in the large audience at this concert was deeply impressed by the verve, enthusiasm and rhythmic cohesion of this large chorus.

Frank Damrosch also conducted the Mendelssohn Glee Club of New York and the Orpheus Glee Club of Philadelphia, the Oratorio Society of Bridgeport, Connecticut, besides the Oratorio Society of New York.

The present generation cannot possibly appreciate the wonderful influence that the father and his two sons brought to bear on all that was fine in the cause of music in this country. They were the true pioneers in this field. That which has come since is largely the outcome of their energy and service.

It is no wonder that I stood in awe of this family, feeling small and unworthy in their presence. It was a wonderful time for me, for it gave me a standard and a living point of emulation. The father, Leopold Damrosch, had no musical background (that fact alone was a great cause of encouragement to me) yet he created with fine craftsmanship an im-

posing artistic edifice in which his family now spiritually lived and had its being.

Dr. Damrosch had evidently from his childhood been passionately in love with music. In his youth his father would not allow him to view his talent as a possible professional career, but insisted that he study medicine. To this the young Leopold finally agreed, but maintained his resolve that he would also keep on with his music. He finally graduated from The Literary University of Friedrich Wilhelm (now the University of Berlin) as Doctor of Medicine, presenting his thesis on "The Heat of the Human Body," a paper that created a strong impression and still remains in the archives of that institution.

Immediately after his graduation he refused to go into medical practice. He could not bear the sight of human blood nor that of human suffering. He henceforth devoted his life completely to the cause of music.

A few years later as concertmaster of the opera orchestra at Weimar he fell in love with and married a beautiful young singer, Helene von Heimburg, tall and regal in stature, and possessing a very fine mezzo-soprano voice. (You see the strange parallel, don't you—your mother singing and I a concertmaster?) She had been singing among other roles, in Weimar and elsewhere, Ortrud in *Lohengrin;* and was then the second one to create that role in Germany. She had studied the part with Liszt, and it was for this master, who was godfather, that they named their first-born Franz (Frank Damrosch).

To the career of a solo violinist, Dr. Damrosch added that of a conductor, giving orchestral and choral concerts. And soon he developed into a prolific composer. He was on the point of accepting a position as conductor in Vienna when he decided instead to choose the offer of the Arion Society of New York to have him conduct the Männerchor of that organization.

From that time onwards his activities developed greatly. He founded the Symphony Society of New York, which he conducted, and appeared often as solo violinist. Then the Oratorio Society. Besides all this he traveled with his orchestra all over the United States, in those days a huge and precarious undertaking. Finally, the bringing to New York of a new and complete German Opera Company and the gathering and training of a chorus among the German population of the city in the singing of the Wagner music dramas to be produced for the first time in America—all this is his doing. It is regrettable that up to now there exists no Life of this great artist and musical pioneer.

TWENTY-FIVE

ROMANTIC PURSUIT

WHEN it came to leaving my mother and my home I always experienced a pull at my heart, and an inner voice prompted me that ambition in itself was a lure and would surely end in delusion. Why should I leave home, the ties of which led so strongly to my own being? Why not be satisfied and enjoy life without the ceaseless call to duty interfering? I might have heeded this voice had I now no new rainbow to chase. So finally I sailed on the "Friedrich der Grosse."

I was given a seat at table among strangers, but just before luncheon Mr. Damrosch asked me to sit at his table, which was to be placed in a small room outside the main dining-room as a special privilege to him and to his family. And so I sat between Mrs. Damrosch and Miss von Heimburg, facing Clara Damrosch. Some months later she told me that I always looked so thin and green (to match an unfortunate pea-green tie I then wore) that she was in constant terror of my becoming seasick and intensifying the wretchedness of my appearance. I did not become seasick;

and during a storm trod the unsteady deck jauntily—and rather affectedly I dare say—to her great relief.

I must here testify, Father, that you have always been the family hero at sea. On the many voyages to Europe we made together—on big boats and little boats, on good boats and bad boats, you were invariably a combination nurse, doctor, philosopher, and manager, while Mother (for the only times in her life reduced to passivity) and I and Tante and the governess, and very often even the stoic Leopold, were prone in the agony of nausea.

On the steamer were three girls, all of them musicians: Helen Louise Cann, one whose name I have forgotten, and Bertha Bucklin. The latter was a charming violinist, facile of finger, possessing a beautiful tone. She also was on her way to study with Halir. These three, Clara and myself, had jolly times on the steamer and planned to meet in Berlin for tea, at the restaurant in the Zoological Garden at a certain day and hour, Miss Damrosch insisting on being hostess on that occasion.

As soon as I reached Berlin I sought out Howard Brockway at the Boises' on the Kurfürstenstrasse and came into contact with this very charming family of father and mother and six girls, the eldest of whom was engaged to Howard. I was taken in and treated as a member of the family, Mrs. Boise at once securing lodgings for me in the neighborhood, a room in a *Gartenwohnung*. This room I left after one

sleepless night for, not being able to drop into sleep, I turned on the light to find huge water bugs on the stone floor and hundred-leggers crawling over the walls.

My lessons started immediately and I began also to study harmony with Mr. Boise, a busy teacher with many American and English pupils. I spent most of my spare time in the congenial atmosphere of the Boise home, where much music was being made, and where I was frequently called upon to play Howard's sonata with him.

The tea party at the Zoo took place as arranged. Clara Damrosch had planned everything delightfully, reserving a table at the rail of a huge balcony overlooking the immense crowd listening to the afternoon concert of one of the finest regimental bands in the army. At that time Clara Damrosch was living in Schandau, near Dresden, but came up every two weeks for a lesson with Busoni. Her presence in Berlin was one of those occasions. I looked forward to the next one when I could see her alone. In the meantime I was meeting some very interesting and attractive people at the Boises', among whom I remember Ernest Hutcheson, not long out of Australia, and Ernest Schelling. Leonora Jackson, the brilliant pupil of Joachim, came too.

Often we went to concerts and the opera, sitting always in the gallery on two-mark seats. It was so gay and fascinating. Weingartner and Muck alternated with each other and with Schuch as conductors, and their conducting was always inspiring. The concertmaster for the Wagner operas

was my teacher Halir. The opera house was often a very brilliant sight with the Kaiser and his suite in the Royal Box, an imposing guard of a famous regiment of cuirassiers at the entrance, and the magnificently uniformed young officers in the best seats.

TWENTY-SIX

HALIR AGAIN: AND MARIENBAD

About the first of August, Halir, who had grown even stouter than last year, decided to go to Marienbad for a cure, saying that if Bertha Bucklin and I desired lessons he would be glad to teach us there. There was no hesitation in accepting his kind proposal.

I spent the first night in Marienbad in a small hotel and during the following morning I tried to find less expensive quarters where I could be allowed to practice as long as I wanted to. It was quite late in the afternoon when I secured a room in a modest quarter of the town. Meals were not included in the agreement with the landlady, not even breakfast. I moved in, fiddle-box and heavy bag, most of the weight of which, however, was music. My possessions were few.

The room was long and narrow. In a dim corner was a huge featherbed, wide but not long enough to allow stretching out at full length. The walls were covered with a dark, lugubrious-looking paper, upon which hung dozens of religious pictures and cheap wood carvings of the crucified

Christ. But there was room enough to walk, which I incessantly did while I practiced.

Before crawling into bed on the first night I had hung all my clothes, including a heavy overcoat, on a tall standing coatrack, right by the side of the bedstead, topping this collection of wearing apparel with a white shirt. Just before dropping off to sleep in this awesome room I was paralyzed with fear at seeing a figure fly straight at me, with enormous arms outstretched as if to clutch my throat. I yelled as this monster fell on me. It was the coatrack, of course, the outstretched arms being the white shirt.

The next morning Helen Louise Cann and Bertha Bucklin appeared. They were unsuccessful in their search for rooms. Marienbad was crowded. I called my landlady. Had she another room? "No, the house is full, every room taken," she said, and then suggested that the two young ladies sleep in my room. "But," I said, "where shall I sleep?" "Why, in your own bed, of course. I have a large screen and will divide your room in two, quite nicely, and everybody will be happy." We all screamed with laugher and my friends fled with tears running down their faces. My landlady could not understand the cause of this unseemly mirth.

Halir was to remain in Marienbad for four weeks, and I had arranged with Clara Damrosch that on my way back to Berlin I would stop over at Schandau to see her. I had now four weeks in which to do telling work, for I wanted to show her how much I had improved in my playing. I set a schedule of seven hours a day practice, for I was told this was neces-

sary if one hoped to achieve technical mastery of a difficult concerto like the Tschaikowsky which I was studying, not to speak of the Beethoven concerto and the Polonaise of Wieniawski. I kept to this schedule rigidly. I gradually lost what appetite I had, and rarely went out. Naturally I became very morose and very homesick and was physically and nervously upset. However, I kept doggedly on. Halir became alarmed, told me to stop practice completely for a few days, and took me out walking, refusing to give me another lesson until I was in better condition. All this time correspondence between Clara Damrosch and myself grew more frequent, which was a great help.

Marienbad was full of Russian Jews. With their long black caftans, or coats, and long untrimmed beards and lovelocks, with gaunt, sick-looking faces they walked up and down, up and down the path leading to the springs, all of them carrying suspended from the waist tin cups which they used in drinking the mineral water prescribed for their cure. They made a very unpleasant and depressing impression.

On a late afternoon, reaching "home" after a walk with Halir, gloomy and spent with fatigue, I heard in the next room to mine a moaning voice, alternately praying and singing Hebrew chants, and evidently in physical and psychological pain. I took up my violin, playing softly the *Kol Nidrei* which the voice had been singing. Before the close of the melody my door was thrust violently open and the nightgowned figure of an enormous, bearded and

miserable-looking man ran to me, throwing his arms about me. "How did you come to play that melody just then? It was a message for me, meant for me alone," he said, "it was a miracle." He had been ill for some time, confined to his bed and very homesick, and knowing no one in Marienbad, had prayed for guidance and help. His mind was now made up. Would I telegraph to Odessa, his home, saying that he was leaving Marienbad the next day? I helped him to make his train, for which he was touchingly grateful.

TWENTY-SEVEN

I PROPOSE

NOT MANY days afterward I sent word to Clara Damrosch at Schandau that I was coming. I never went aboard a train in happier anticipation, and on arriving at Schandau was met at the station with a heart-warming welcome. Then straight to Frau Zschachlitz' where Clara was living and to tea in the garden where a table had been laid for two. Those were happy weeks. I had a room in the upper part of the house, and whether at Frau Zschachlitz' or in the restaurant, Clara and I had our meals together.

Johannes Schreyer, Clara's former harmony teacher and her most devoted friend, came to visit her once or twice. I was much impressed with the culture and erudition of this splendid man. Great independence and fearlessness were characteristic of him on most subjects, particularly on musical matters. An indefatigable student of Bach, he was considered an expert on the works of the master and ahead of his time. He suffered lack of worldly recognition through his independence and uncompromising loyalty to the truth as he saw it.

In the afternoons, for we worked mornings, Clara and I had many a walk to nearby places, stopping at some lovely spot for coffee. Very often I helped carry her painting things, for she sketched with enthusiasm. After one of these afternoons, in her room, I proposed to her and was accepted. It was only natural that I spent a sleepless night, looking out of a tiny skylight placed in the sheer slope of the roof not more than a foot over my bed. A dark blue starry sky, so serene and quiet, did not prove an effective antidote for my racing thoughts. I thought of Clara's wonderful father and hoped, with little inner encouragement, that he might look upon our union with favor. Oh, I did feel so miserably unworthy. But at breakfast in the bright, sunlit garden with Clara's bright eyes shining upon me I could not but feel the promise of great things for us both, and the mist of doubt passed away.

We agreed on a holiday from work. A rosy-cheeked, middle-aged driver and his rig were engaged to take us to a well-known hillside with a wide view of the surrounding country. It meant continual and rather hard climbing even for two horses. I walked most of the time next the carriage talking with Clara, while our very sympathetic driver was on the other side encouraging the horses. We finally reached the end of our climb to find a charming café and garden perched on the edge of a tremendously sheer precipice.

It was a golden afternoon of a beautiful day, and we sat long over our cups of coffee and good cake and watched the shadows lengthen way down below. The ride home was a

jolly affair, the driver regaling us with many humorous remarks in the dialect of the region. We have never forgotten him. He helped in his way to make it a memorable day.

One day we boarded one of the attractive river boats bound for Dresden. It was wonderful before sundown to sit together on the Brühlsche Terrasse, looking up the river colored by the setting sun, crossed by beautiful arched bridges. When we came back to Schandau Clara found a telegram in answer to hers sent that morning to her closest friend, Elizabeth Mosenthal, announcing her engagement. The reply was, "If you are sure, pour on the kerosene and let her burn."

"Why do you want to marry me?" Clara asked. "Because I am searching," I said, "for the truth," and felt afterwards that I had answered rather enigmatically and not to Clara's complete satisfaction. I hardly blame her—although I know now and knew then what I meant.

TWENTY-EIGHT

I MARRY

Soon after, the Elbe, on account of heavy rains, had overflowed its banks. Schandau became flooded. Traffic in the streets of the old town was carried on in boats, a very amusing and picturesque sight. We thought it best to leave and bade a regretful good-by to Frau Zschachlitz, who had been the first to know of our engagement and whose kindness and care we appreciated with all our hearts.

Clara knew of a very good pension in Berlin, where we both lived until our return to New York. Her work with Busoni continued and a few hours after her first lesson there came a gorgeous box of flowers from her teacher. Of course Clara had told him of our engagement.

Professor Halir was at home again, lighter in weight, and celebrating his release from a longish period of abstinence by eating heartily and drinking beer, in full contentment and in utter disregard of the doctor's instructions.

My lessons went on, and my teacher seemed much pleased with my work. He said I must go with him to Joachim for

whom I was to play. A time was set but I never showed up. I was horribly afraid of playing for the great man. I lacked the necessary nerve to go through such an ordeal and have been sorry ever since to have let slip such an opportunity to meet the master. Halir was much provoked, but he understood finally.

Halir at my last lesson told me that if I ever came to Europe again to study he would advise me to go to Ysaye; that while he would always welcome me as a pupil, he felt that my feeling for the violin indicated a natural trend towards the Belgian school. I was grateful for this unselfish advice and wondered at Halir's acute perception, for ever since I had heard the great Belgian, the sound of his violin, his handling of the instrument, the infinite sensitivity of his flawless bowing, I had possessed a constant and guiding picture; and perhaps I had already, in my playing, taken on some qualities of the Belgian school.

We sailed from Hamburg on the "Barbarossa" with many misgivings as to how our engagement would be taken in New York by Clara's family. As to my own family's reception, I felt secure; though I knew that my mother in particular realized with sadness that I would leave home and that our very intimate companionship must undergo an outward change. At the Captain's table, a long one in those days, Howard Brockway and Miss von Heimburg, whom I now called "Tante," sat opposite us. They were very jolly meals. The ocean was calm, which was particularly fortunate, for one morning a loud explosion occurred, coming from the

engine-room, followed by the disquieting noise of escaping steam. The engines were stopped. One of the large piston heads had blown off and been hurled through the skylight. No one in the crew was hurt and soon after we proceeded slowly with only one screw working, while the engineers worked steadily for over twenty-four hours fabricating a new piston head, a remarkable feat to accomplish at sea.

Arriving in New York Clara had to undergo the barrage of most of her family's disapproval of our engagement. I quite agreed with them. What was I but a young orchestra violinist of no particular distinction, with no particular promise of a brilliant future, of a family of the average small-business outlook, modest and honest good people of very little cultural background. I felt then, as I do now, a tremendous admiration for Clara's courage at that time, and I realized poignantly too my mother's fine reserve in accepting changed conditions in our home life; for now my leisure time was spent with Clara. At no time did she speak of her own feelings, but the undercurrent of sadness was there. She admired Clara and grudged her nothing, encouraging me, congratulating me always on the great prize I had won. There could not be a nobler spirit than my mother's.

The concert season began again; and besides the hundred concerts scheduled for eight months with four rehearsals weekly, including tours of the German Opera season, I played small solo engagements and sonata recitals with Howard Brockway. I went on giving lessons and the number of pupils increased. I wanted all the work I could get,

for if I was to marry in the spring, as we had planned, I must have enough funds to meet a much larger expenditure. Clara too taught busily and indeed intended keeping on with her work until my income was sufficient for us both. One of the many plans Clara and I had made was that never were we to play in public together, no matter what the inducement might be!

We wanted a simple wedding, and since Clara's sister Ellie, Mrs. Henry T. Seymour, was living then in Middle Granville, New York, with her husband and two small children, we decided to have our wedding there on June 4, 1898. The imminent change in my life brought me great complexity of mind and dread forebodings for the future when I was alone. With Clara this uneasiness always disappeared, and I wondered at her remarkable capacity for thinking clearly and planning with every detail outlined in her mind. Her optimism was naturally most refreshing and strengthening.

The wedding day drew near and both of us kept on with our work up to a few days before our departure for Middle Granville. My parents and my sister arrived the day before the wedding as did all the Damrosch family and a number of Clara's closest friends. The next day was bright with brilliant June sunshine and all the guests were early assembled in and about the small house.

Clara's mother was found by her son Walter weeping on the front porch. He tried to soothe her by saying, "Mother, you're not losing Clara. She remains with you at home as before. Don't cry." "Oh, it isn't that, Walter, at all; but the

lobster is all spoiled!" she sobbed. She had prepared and brought some of her choicest dishes from New York for the wedding breakfast, of which the lobster was her best offering. Clara had contracted a bronchial cold and felt quite miserable, but little Lawrence Seymour's telling her repeatedly to "Sheer up, Tante Lalla, sheer up," did help to bring humor at a necessary time. Lawrence had a German nurse, and the boy for a long time spoke English with a strong German accent.

My sister at the piano, Bertha Bucklin, violin, and Lillian Littlehales, 'cello, played most beautifully, before the ceremony, the Adagio from the *trio in B flat* of Beethoven. I turned pages for them, expecting Clara to come down the stairs where I was to meet her. I became so engrossed in the music that I forgot everything else and had to be pulled out of a trance to meet the bride in front of the minister. I was so confused that when in the ceremony I was asked, "Do you take this woman," etc., I answered, "I am."

We left soon after in an open carriage with our baggage strapped on behind, waving good-by and being showered with rice. Looking back at a bend in the road I saw someone running after us, shouting for us to stop. He had my violin case under his arm. I had forgotten my fiddle for the first time in my life.

TWENTY-NINE

I WORRY

THUS ended my first epoch, B. C. (Before Clara), and began Clara's second epoch, A. D. (After David)!

We spent the first night at a hotel called the Trout Pavilion on Lake George. The next morning we crossed the lake on the steamboat to the Sagamore Hotel, where I had played for several seasons years before and where we were greeted by some of my old friends, including the proprietor and his family. I wanted to show Clara the place where I had spent so many happy and carefree days.

After a few days at the Sagamore we went to Paradox Lake, driving through a violent thunderstorm from Port Ticonderoga. We were to spend the summer at the F——'s at the lake, a boarding-house. The F——'s were a middle-aged couple, he a gentle-mannered and unobtrusive person who, we were shortly to find, was an epileptic and mildly insane; she a heavy-featured and rather corpulent person who managed the place, did all the cooking, and looked after her ailing husband.

We had a room on the second floor under the sloping roof. It was humid and close all summer. The prospects for an idyllic summer seemed to wane, for added to the discomfort of our immediate environment, I was physically enervated and spiritually at low ebb. There was no place out of hearing where I could practice, and finally in search of a room away from the house I found sanctuary for work in a deserted barn where once in a while a horse was temporarily stabled.

In time we secured a rowboat, and much of our time was spent on the lake, rowing often about a mile to swim. Once, in the moonlight, we were startled by a tremendous splash, followed by smaller rhythmic ones as if some huge body were swimming in frantic haste. I think that I never rowed as fast as I did that night, away from that fearsome splashing. We were told the next morning that we were quite right to be frightened, for the disturber of the moonlit night was a bear.

The summer passed on slowly in the humid atmosphere, in that stuffy little box of a house. Ungallant as it may sound, I missed the companionship and interest which I had previously enjoyed in the summertime at Lake George and at Blue Mountain Lake in the Adirondacks—the many friends I had made at these places, their appreciation of my playing, and the association and the playing with some of the young musicians.

A new life had begun for me, an entirely new orientation, and a decided increase in responsibilities; and while I would not have changed back, I missed the old associations most

poignantly. Most of it was fear, I realize now, of untried ground. Nightmares in broad daylight stalked me constantly. I was a sorry husband to one whose natural faith in and optimism for the future made her such a delightful companion, chasing most effectively, for a time, the threatening clouds of destruction. I became dependent on her entirely for the courage I so woefully lacked.

In my youth I saved by far the greater part of my earnings for my study abroad, and always gave the money to my mother to put away until the amount warranted placing it for safety in a bank. Now I fell into the old habit. I gave my wife all responsibility for planning, and such business arrangements as were necessary to our work and living, placing full reliance on her clear judgment and wisdom in budgeting. This left me free to live on to dream, not idle phantasies, but to plan in my own obscure way all that would make life worth the living.

The work I chose to do has never been perfunctory, for I had a goal, though dimly seen, which was my objective. Not merely a living to earn but a real life out of living. That meant real freedom, for I believed a heaven existed on earth, that life could be made glorious, inwardly stimulating, if one accepted the latent god in the human being. This conception needed speech: thus music, in its highest and purest form, became a necessity to mankind.

When I had reached this point of conviction I discarded what pride of performance I may have possessed, what desire for cheap publicity I may have intermittently enter-

tained. I shunned professional companionship, the sterile musical jargon of fiddle and piano playing. It was not inspiring to be told by my musical friends of the hopelessness of a musical career, that it led to ultimate disappointment and loss of youthful illusions. My stubborn resistance to this influence was fortified by a personal vision of a life devoted to a philosophy, indefinite as it was, in which music might be the key to many a locked door to deeper understanding. No matter where or what I played, it was to me *the* opportunity to test by other ears and hearts than my own the assurance of this deeply rooted belief.

Alas, the fallacy of it was too often proved by a performance that lacked any trace of such deliverance and left behind a scathing memory of execrable violin playing and poor musicianship. Such memories brought a feeling of shame which plunged me into a devastating sense of futility and personal worthlessness. And so I ranged from Hell to Heaven, or the other way round.

If my wife found this lack of stability in me difficult, she made no sign of it, and her optimism held full sway, proving a refuge in moments of despair.

Late in August we left Paradox Lake for a few weeks' stay in Canada, most of the time stopping with old friends and seeking out my old haunts, Berthier-en-haut and Cap Rouge.

But soon we were on our way back to New York, back to 327 Amsterdam Avenue, the apartment which had been Clara's home with her mother and aunt, both of whom gave us a most affectionate welcome. They had contrived to

arrange a small apartment for us as well as an independent one for themselves. Here, too, the Frank Damroschs had a larger apartment on the floor above—connected by a "secret" staircase which always seemed to be the delight of our children.

Our little home was most attractive and cheerful. Clara began her teaching, the pupils coming now to her; while I, renting Mr. Damrosch's studio at Carnegie Hall for three afternoons a week, had my pupils there. The studio next to ours was occupied by James Gordon Hardie, a well-known portrait painter with whom I soon became acquainted. He asked me to sit for him, or rather stand, for he chose to paint me in the act of playing the violin. He called it "Bildniss eines Mannes"—and generously gave it to me.

At the same time I kept on with my work in Rivington Street at the Settlement, teaching the violin and conducting the growing string orchestra of children. The school had grown in size, needing more room and more teachers. Some of the older boys were enrolled in the faculty as student teachers and a number of musical amateurs from uptown took places on the list as so-called volunteers.

Financial backing for the school was meager, and the worry of meeting our most modest deficit always bore heavily upon us. A young violinist from upstate came to study with me privately. He had heard much of our music school and hoped some day to work in it. By temperament enthusiastic but impractical, generous to a fault, an intense music-lover, his was a spirit, I soon realized, that could find haven

in such work. It was a fortuitous happening that brought us together at the right moment. Since salary was no object to him I was able to install him as my assistant at a nominal salary. His name was Edgar Stowell, later head of the Bronx Music School.

He was invaluable to the work at this time for he was able to devote all his afternoons to teaching, while I could scarcely find time to give more than three afternoons a week to this increasingly engrossing adventure. It was also necessary to secure a substitute conductor for the little orchestra. Good fortune again brought to me a Mr. Perry, a young violinist and good musician who now took charge of the sundry rehearsals which were held at the University Settlement in Rivington Street.

The rehearsals for the symphony concerts had already begun. Added to these were those for the German Opera season for which Mr. Walter Damrosch had been preparing during the summer. He had engaged in Germany Alvary and Rothmühl, tenors; Ternina, Gadski, sopranos, Marie Bremer, mezzo, Emil Fischer, basso, and many others. Jan Koert was concertmaster and a most effective one too, for he knew intimately, through his European experience in the various opera houses, all the Wagner music dramas.

I sat next to him but lived literally in another world, for this music stirred me to untold depths of my being. I remember, after a performance of *Tristan and Isolde*, walking and walking until almost daybreak as if in a dream, living over

again the tragic surge of the music and the immense portent of heroic and self-sacrificing love.

The complete thrall this music held over me once led the first flute player, Schade, to say to me during the intermission after the second act: "See here, Mannes, if you keep on playing that way during the rest of the season, you'll finish by wearing a *wooden* overcoat in the spring."

THIRTY

WAGNER OPERAS TOUR AMERICA

THE Wagner Opera tours kept me away from New York for weeks at a time. I traveled as far as Chicago, Omaha, and Kansas City, with many a one-night stand all the way. All of the performances were sold out and the sign in the lobby of the theatres, "Standing Room Only," was a nightly and most gratifying display.

In Omaha, a one-night stand, *Die Walkure* was billed for performance, and for this opera a horse was needed to carry a Walkure at top speed past a netted opening in a backdrop. The floor of that particular part of the stage was covered with heavy felting to eliminate all sounds of thudding hoofs. This horse had been selected and rehearsed before our arrival, but, to the dismay of the stage manager, failed to appear long after the appointed time at the stage door. What was to be done? The performance could not go on: the curtain could not be raised without the horse actually on the stage.

Jack, the baggage-master, took upon himself the charge of securing this property. A very important person in the

company was Jack. Upon him depended the safe and timely arrival of large orchestral instruments, costumes, properties and immense stage sets, etc. Jack had formerly been a medium-weight pugilist and his face bore many distorted features, reminiscences of well-directed and crushing blows —a bashed-in nose, cauliflower ears, and a crooked mouth. On our tours there were many occasions when his lightning-like fists were used effectively to bring baggage through in time, for his work was often interfered with by local baggagemen who felt themselves discriminated against in not receiving contracts for trucking. Jack and I were friends and he constituted himself my protector. I often rode with him in the baggage car and he told me of his bouts as a professional boxer.

Jack the resourceful went out into the street, saw a deserted and dilapidated cab with a sleeping and spavined nag in the shafts. As luck would have it, the driver was not in sight. Quickly unhitching the horse, he pulled him through the stage door.

The conductor went below and in a few minutes the curtain rose to the wild grandeur of the Ride of the Valkyries. Rising above the music we distinctly heard backstage the sound of lumbering hoofs—in the excitement the heavy floor covering had been forgotten and was not laid—and across the opening of the drop there appeared the old white cab horse. Seated on his back was Jack, his man-handled face grinning beneath the brass helmet from under which hung the long golden tresses of an heroic Valkyrie, while over

his shoulders was her white mantle and in his hand a long spear!

Our conductor almost dropped his baton in consternation and surprise but held on to it only to hit Novacek, the first viola, who had stood up while playing to witness the amazing sight. Jack's impromptu appearance on horseback was explained afterwards by the sudden illness of the girl rider. Perhaps, seeing that sorry bony creature, she feigned an illness rather than appear on it.

We were fortunate in having as our first horn player at this time Xavier Reiter. He had come to this country to be with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, attracting attention not only as an outstanding artist, but by his unique appearance as well. His long, raven-black hair parted in the middle hung to his shoulders like Buffalo Bill's, and like the famous Indian scout, he wore a mustache and a Vandyke beard.

The Symphony Society was able to secure his services on account of an unpleasant happening to Reiter at the end of his third season in Boston. On his daily walks in and about the city he was always accompanied by two huge Russian wolfhounds. While bathing them one morning in the fountain on Boston Common, he was arrested with his dogs, and all were confined in jail for a few hours. He was bailed out only in time to play an afternoon concert of the orchestra. This indignity to his pride brought Boston and everything in it his withering contempt. He deserted the community as one unworthy of his services as an artist and a free spirit!

The performances of *The Ring–Rheingold, Walküre,*

Siegfried, and *Götterdammerung*—brought Reiter the greatest joy, for was he not the hunting horn of Siegfried? He refused to sit in the orchestra but stood in the wings to sound heroically Siegfried's challenging notes as they had never echoed before, and as they have never echoed since that time. Now Reiter lived apart from his colleagues, deigning to give an occasional nod to us weaklings, for he was Siegfried the Hero Incarnate. With Alvary, the unforgettable son of Sieglinde, he became a bosom friend; at least he considered himself so, for had not Alvary given him a case of champagne on tour in token of his inestimable assistance?

Reiter remained in our orchestra until it was disbanded a few years later; he then joined the Philharmonic, with which he played up to the time of his retirement a few years ago to a house he had built in Westchester County and which he appropriately enough called Walhalla. I felt very much favored by an invitation to visit him there, but for some reason I never took advantage of his kind and surely sincere courtesy. I am told that for years, in and around the locality of his little house, Siegfried's horn sounded often through the early morning hours.

Our tours were, in the main, scheduled as one-night stands. This entailed hard labor and astute management on the part of the executive force responsible for the company's prompt appearance at a point sometimes three or four hundred miles away. The heavy sets for *The Ring*, *Meistersinger*, *Lohengrin*, and *Tannhauser*, had to be taken to pieces

and carted, together with many trunks of instruments and costumes, to the railroad freight yards, packed into detached baggage cars, which were then shunted and attached to the line of sleeping coaches (we always traveled on a special train running on its own schedule) in which lay at rest the one hundred and fifty men and women of the company —the cast, chorus and orchestra.

The pivotal point of the managing of this huge and complicated organization was our conductor, Walter Damrosch. Add to this program our daily rehearsals which we looked upon as an ordinary item of routine, and one must wonder more than ever that this amazing young man could carry through so stupendous a task. It surely left him little time for preparation or for the musical meditation so necessary for the responsible artist. One could often hear him in his hotel room, in the few minutes he had to spare at the piano, playing for himself, or going over some parts of a score, coaching a singer and giving, at the same time, stage directions and some information important to dramatic business.

The only moments of relaxation and ease came to us on day jumps to comparatively nearby cities, when the orchestra played poker in the foul, smoke-wreathed day coaches. Russell, the drum and cymbal player who was also the librarian—big, heavy and lethargic—possessed the ideal poker face, and often landed in New York after these tours richer by several hundred dollars. Drawn into one of the poker games I lost, in as many minutes, twenty dollars, much to the amusement of my companions and the benign

satisfaction of Russell, the game's banker. I never played poker after this.

The men of the orchestra traveled with very light baggage, mostly small bags. Several of us had, besides, small trunks which were sent to those of us who stopped at hotels —an expensive thing to do, for our allowance on tour was $2.50 a day to cover living expenses—room and meals and something left over for the usual meeting of the orchestra after the performance in some back-room of a German beer saloon before the train was boarded. These nightly meetings were genial times indeed, and the hilarious company sometimes included our conductor. Often now I met him in the restaurants of the hotels, and by invitation at the same table.

At one such time I had the great pleasure also of meeting Ethel Barrymore, then about twenty-two years of age, the most beautiful and charming woman I had ever met. She was touring as star with her own company under the management of Charles Frohman.

In the mornings, when our train arrived at its destination, some of the men would jump off almost before the wheels had stopped and run to hunt for rooming-houses which asked only one dollar for a night's lodging. They seemed to know just where to go and were soon settled. Once I hunted with them, but was so appalled at the thought of spending the night in such a place that I never tried it again. Instead, I sought a good hotel with Jan Koert, our concertmaster, indulging in a luxury which made these tours a financial loss—to me, at least.

In the evenings when I reached the opera house or theatre rather early before the performance, I would see, back of the scene set for the first act, trunks being opened by the orchestra men in every degree of undress; bass boxes like huge and ugly sarcophagi being opened to extract the instruments swathed like mummies, for wrapped about them were many wrinkled suits of evening wear. A number of the men, to save laundry expense, resorted to "dickies," packets of paper shirt bosoms held together like writing-pads and torn off one at a time. They were fastened to a collar button, and hung on the chest. With coat and vest on, it was not discovered by a casual observer that paper took the place of immaculate and gleaming white linen.

The one-night stands were telling on me with the irregularity of eating and sleeping; but the emotional toll I paid at every Wagner performance was the highest. I tried time and time again to play without the passionate interest the music evoked in me, but then I grew ashamed and felt a disloyalty, which I could not spiritually bear, to the music. With experience, however, I learnt more and more to play with greater ease.

I discovered that what caused my destructive manner of playing was not a real emotional outgiving but a bodily strain—a serious handicap to a smooth, elegant and expressive style. The cause was a lack of perfect co-ordination and physical balance. Had I known this years earlier I might have been spared untold distress and disappointment. Why had

none of my teachers led me upon an easier path? Was it their fault? I am inclined to think, however, that my stupidity and a foolish willful pride in shutting my eyes to good examples around me were to blame.

Our audiences varied with the cities where we played. In Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Louis they listened with appreciative ears and a prepared intelligence for German opera, for these cities held a large Teutonic population. In many other cities there existed a profound ignorance of opera, and German opera particularly, with its literary basis in the Teutonic sagas and the mythological folklore. In such places people came to the performances out of curiosity stimulated by an actively-created newspaper publicity.

These various tours lasted from one to many more weeks at a time, but were always planned to allow our return to New York for a pair of symphony concerts and a performance of the Oratorio Society which was being prepared and conducted by Frank Damrosch.

At the end of this season I decided to give up the opera tours and remain in New York to continue teaching and retain my place in the orchestra for the symphony and oratorio concerts. Then, too, I wanted to take hold with greater diligence of the work at the Music School Settlement—which had now bought two small houses at 53 and 55 East Third Street. While the concerts of the Symphony and Oratorio Societies presented ever growing deficits at the end of the season, the personal opera venture of Mr. Damrosch was

financially highly successful; encouraging him to plan for the continuation of it, making new and more expensive contracts for solo singers, orchestras, chorus, and for the importation of more effective scenery from Vienna. The second season, however, had a different ending.

THIRTY-ONE

THE SETTLEMENT GROWS

For the summer months we rented a tiny cottage at Sagaponack on Long Island, where Mrs. Leopold Damrosch and Tante lived with us. A child was coming to us, and my thoughts were colored with the fear of our adding another human being to the countless unhappy ones; a human being, moreover, who could carry the same characteristics I had labored so long to outgrow and discard. I prayed, within, that for my daughter or son, health, the first requisite, would be granted; a high, well-built and ready intelligence that would permit my child eventually to stand unafraid and secure against material debasement; and the illumination of that inner vision which, with the beauty of kindness, tolerance and forbearance, would help those who came within the radius of her or his life.

If a daughter were to be our first child, then I prayed that she would possess the courageous vision and strength of purpose of a Joan of Arc. If a son, I longed for an approach to my idea of the gentleman, a man's man of an unquestioned intellectual honesty which would bring him freedom from cant and hypocrisy, and a progress unstimulated by any

form of material competition; that he would not lose sight of his fellows but center his ambition on the only goal—to get ahead of himself, his only opponent.

Thinking of this approaching child, I began to look at all children as being my own in a sense that I, as their father, might help in the manner I saw fit. In this way it was made clear to me that the unspoken desire of my heart had led me to the little class of Miss Wagner in Rivington Street. I looked at this now as the one possible medium for such a philosophic venture, but not as an experiment. I was sure of the ground, and once on the ground I could look at the stars.

Children came to the school by the hundreds, and with their coming we soon found our space inadequate and our organization too weak in funds to cope with an increasing deficit. Hundreds of children on the waiting list clamored for lessons which cost but twenty-five cents, with ten cents added for class lessons in elementary harmony with Angela Diller, and orchestra practice under me. Fifty cents, and later on one dollar, was asked for lessons with me.

The young players, the more advanced ones, met me every Sunday morning at eleven at the rehearsal of the Senior Orchestra. Absentees were rare. Parents and neighbors came to these rehearsals, and Handel, Beethoven, Bach, Haydn, Mozart and Brahms became reverential synonyms for freedom and a quiet exaltation. Added to this audience later on were people who came from uptown, friends of the Board, and visitors who had read of the school's work through articles in magazines.

The rehearsal room, measuring roughly eighteen by thirty feet, became too crowded and stuffy, and windows had to be opened even in winter time. A sudden and startling interruption was caused at one of these rehearsals by a stone which came hurtling through the window and barely missed my head. Fortunately no one was hurt. The street was infested by a lawless gang of boys and this instance was a sample of their feeling against us as unwelcome intruders. We discovered who these boys were. The leader was offered free violin lessons, became an enthusiastic pupil, and brought many of his companions to the school as students.

Seated very near a little wan-looking second violinist as a rapt listener on a Sunday morning was a gentle, elderly lady from uptown who, moved by the enthusiastic attitude of this starved-looking youngster, handed him a five-dollar bill. In perplexed hesitation, stammering his protestations, he said, "I couldn't take it. He," pointing to me, "wouldn't like me to." I had often said that to take without giving an equivalent in work was weakening one's self-respect, and that this was a very high price to pay for such a loss. Orderliness, cleanliness, discipline, reverence and generosity were but a few of the necessary virtues that could be inculcated through the works of the great masters. No opportunity was lost through these agencies to illustrate in a simple way the art of living.

The medium of religious instruction to which these young minds had been exposed had been, naturally, the Old Testament. The philosophies of life according to Matthew,

Luke and Paul were unknown, and in fact proscribed reading or study for them.

We always began our rehearsals with a Bach chorale set for strings, played by the young pupils with true devotion. An exceptionally beautiful sound was characteristic of these youngsters, both boys and girls, especially remarkable when one remembered that the best violin in this orchestra was a cheap fiddle, hardly deserving the name of violin. It seemed to most of our cultured listeners something of a miracle that sonority and fineness of tone could be drawn from that poor collection of assembled wood and strings.

There was brought to me on one of these mornings a short, stocky boy of about eighteen, who wore, almost down to his knees, a belted blouse of Russian manufacture. It appeared that he had escaped from Russia and military service. He had had lessons on the 'cello but in the hurry of his escape had left his instrument behind. One could not help becoming interested in this fine, honest character, and soon he was taken into the school, given a 'cello and sent to the Institute of Musical Art to study with Alwin Schroeder, formerly first 'cellist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and at that time a member of the distinguished Kneisel Quartet.

This boy, Lieff Rosanoff, became eventually a most valuable member on the large faculty of our school. His class of pupils numbered at least thirty-five, the largest number of 'cello students then in New York. One of these pupils was Marie Roemaet, now Mrs. Lieff Rosanoff, the distinguished 'cellist of the Musical Art Quartet. In Lillian Littlehales'

volume, *Pablo Casals*, the following mention is made of Lieff Rosanoff: "It is impossible to lay too much stress upon the significance or the stimulating effect of Casals' ideas, their working out both in theory and practice. The most active agents in giving expression to this revolutionary method of 'cello instruction are Diran Alexanian in Paris . . . and Lieff Rosanoff in New York."

THIRTY-TWO

EAST THIRD STREET

ABOUT this time the Board of the school secured another house adjoining the two already in our possession. We had to move out and place our classes in various churches and meeting halls on the lower East Side, pending the altering and remodeling of the three houses, and the building of a recital hall over the backyards. The next fall we opened the new building with its many tiny teaching rooms, and its commodious if bare concert hall which seated several hundred people. Its stage was large enough for at least forty players, later enlarged to hold still more.

Thomas Tapper, writer and musical pedagogue, had been appointed director, with me as the head of the string department. Miss Wagner resigned to form a school of her own.

We now had a head-worker and several assistants, all residents of the house. The large influx of children bringing their parents with them to plead for admission made it necessary to investigate the home conditions of these applicants, the rent they paid, and the income of the wage-earners of the

family. While we knew that the school's attractiveness and the quality of its teaching were sound, it seemed unfair to admit those who could afford the higher fees of private teachers.

In the midst of the shambles of a rotting spiritual and physical decay it is no wonder that the love of music should thrust its comforting ray of hope into these tenement houses crowded with people of persecuted background. The terror of Russian pogroms still left many an open wound and the horror of narrow escapes was shudderingly talked about. No wonder that they, in a new country free from this nightmare, should huddle tightly together to gain courage.

It can easily be understood why the children came to us in such numbers, many of them unable to pay the modest fee for lessons; and why, once they were admitted, they came directly from public school to East Third Street, remaining there most of their time and forming little groups of ensemble players. Never have I experienced such an atmosphere of unalloyed happiness.

One must not judge harshly the ambition of the poor and hard-working parents if they turned the thoughts of their children in the direction of professional gain.

I preached the cause of music in its highest and most abstract flight, and felt always depressed and discouraged when I looked ahead and saw myself a party to casting immature products on the professional music market, already overcrowded, bringing disappointment where joy should have remained.

Mrs. Howard Mansfield had become the chairman of the Board of Trustees and under her wise control the school became better organized and financially more securely supported. Shortly after Mr. Thomas Tapper resigned. He could give but little time to the direction of the school, and by unanimous vote of the Board I was appointed director.

THIRTY-THREE

A SON IS BORN

DURING this development of the Settlement School much had come to pass in my own private life. A son came to us on the day after Christmas, 1899, most unwillingly, for his life was in danger. Through the assistance of a specialist called in at the critical moment, the child's life was spared.

The boy was named Leopold Damrosch in memory of his maternal grandfather. The trained nurse's period of service to the infant was indefinitely prolonged owing to the highly nervous equipment of her charge, for with his large staring brown eyes, only intermittently and fitfully closed in slumber, he required constant and expert attention.

A few weeks after the birth of Leopold his mother resumed her work as teacher. I began then to arrange for a series of six subscription quartet concerts to take place in the home of Mrs. Clarence Rice at 81 Irving Place. My associates were Ludwig Marum, second violin, Jacob Altschuler, viola, and Leo Schultz, 'cello, all members of the reorganized New York Symphony Orchestra of which I was now concert-

master. This reorganization was made necessary by the disastrous losses of the previous year—losses which threatened the orchestra's existence.

Only the Oratorio Society seemed able to live—largely owing to the enthusiastic control of Frank Damrosch, who in addition to his choral work in New York, Philadelphia and Bridgeport, now formed a body of professional singers, sixty in number, to perform "a capella" works of the great masters. This was known as the Musical Art Society.

The second German Opera season of Mr. Damrosch's was not like the first, and had been such a complete financial loss that further adventure in the field was impossible. Walter Damrosch had returned with his family to Fox Meadow in Westchester County to devote himself to composition. Among his works at this time was a sonata for violin and piano entitled *At Fox Meadow*, which was of special interest to us, for its inscription bore the legend, "Dedicated to Mr. and Mrs. David Mannes." This work received its first public performance at a recital of my brother-in-law's compositions at the Waldorf-Astoria, with him at the piano and I "behind the violin" as I chose to call it.

THIRTY-FOUR

FRITZ KREISLER: THE KNEISEL QUARTET: WEINGARTNER

On the programs of the Musical Art concerts a large body of strings was employed in the playing of a Bach or Handel Concerto Grosso. It was used also in accompaniment for the *Double Concerto* of Bach, which I played as associate soloist with Fritz Kreisler when he appeared in America for the first time. First, that is, if one omits his appearance as a *Wunderkind* with Anton Rubinstein on his American tour twenty years before.

Kreisler as a grown man and mature artist brought with him a new and refreshing element as a violin soloist. With extraordinary charm and a captivating rhythmic verve his playing of the Brahms violin *Concerto* had not a trace of that ponderous and scratchy performance which usually stigmatized this superb composition. In the public mind it had always been judged as dull and purely cerebral; and in that of the average musician, not as "a concerto for the violin" but as one written against the king of instruments. Kreisler's playing of the concerto was then, and remains to-

day, unapproachable in every essential of the composer's intention.

Rehearsing with him for the Bach *Double Concerto*, I spent many hours in the company of this great artist, and had my keenest delight when, at my request, he played the *Kreutzer Etudes*. I still believe, as I did then, that a recital devoted to his playing of these exercises would serve as an object lesson to all teachers and students of the violin. It would conclusively prove that musical charm and rhythmic uprightness need not be sacrificed, nor that this most sensitive of all instruments be subjected to the torture so often inflicted on it by so-called "conscientious practice."

Whatever this young master played became, for the time being, his own, and brought complete satisfaction even to those who recalled the performances of Wilhelmjor Joachim in the Beethoven *Concerto*.

I had now in my worshiping memory three musical revelations, three great personalities: Paderewski, Ysaye, and Kreisler. Later I was to add one more, Pablo Casals. All exerted a profound and enduring influence that corroborated the vague musical dreams of my early youth.

Before her marriage my wife had been one of the first subscribers to the chamber music concerts of the Kneisel Quartet of which Franz Kneisel was first violin, Otto Roth, second violin, Louis Svecenski, viola, and Alwin Schroeder, 'cello. These concerts were meagerly attended until, as a bid for a larger public, they engaged Joseffy to play with them the Schumann *quintet*. This proved such a success that after-

The Mannes Quartet. David Mannes, First Violin. Ludwig Marum, Second Vio
Jacob Altschuler, Viola: Leo Schulz, 'Cello

wards the services of a famous visiting pianist were nearly always enlisted in the performance of piano quartets and quintets. Then chamber music concerts became popular with the musical cognoscenti of New York, and it was *the* thing to be a steady subscriber to this annual series of concerts. These occasions were fruitful experiences for me and gave me invaluable standards to keep in mind later on. The playing of this Quartet was then at its highest artistic level, and it is the period I want to remember when I think of the Kneisel Quartet.

Some years afterwards, on the program of their two concerts in Brooklyn and New York was the then unfamiliar quintet of César Franck, with Clara Damrosch Mannes assisting. As a token of a very fine performance Clara presented me with two pearl studs, purchased with the fees earned by her at these concerts. I still use them with evening wear. I may be absent-minded, but there are some things I do not lose!

At a later concert of the Quartet I conducted, seated, and played with a small string orchestra the accompaniment to the Bach *Double Concerto* in which Kneisel and Theodorovitch were the soloists.

This was the year in which Mr. Damrosch brought over Weingartner as guest conductor. We immensely enjoyed the leadership of this fine and virile director. His European reputation as a distinguished artist was well known in our country, and to this were added the laurels won from an enthusiastic American public. The orchestra made several tours

with him, and in Chicago, Cincinnati, and Milwaukee particularly—cities which held a numerous German population —the concert halls were jammed by audiences which gave the conductor a tremendous welcome and always fine appreciation. In Boston, on the contrary, many seats were vacant and the small audience was very cold. I remember the manager telling us that the receipts of this concert totaled only $175. I don't think Boston would be guilty of such musical apathy today!

THIRTY-FIVE

SUMMER ON MECOX BAY: DEATH OF A QUARTET: THE SYMPHONY CLUB

AFTER a season of constant and hard work of orchestra rehearsals, quartet rehearsals, lessons and the mounting responsibilities of the Settlement it was good to settle in a small farmhouse for the summer on the shore of Mecox Bay near Bridgehampton, Long Island. Our family included Mrs. Damrosch, Tante, and little Leopold with his devoted trained nurse. With us also was Peter Kurz, whom Thomas Mott Osborne had sent to New York to study with me. His board and lessons were returned in various items of service such as waiting on table, and driving "The Walker Gordon Express"—the rolling stock of which consisted of a bicycle and, as trailer, a toy express wagon—to the railroad station two miles away to fetch the daily shipment of prepared milk for the baby. It was an amusing sight to see Peter riding furiously along with a wildly careening little wagon hitched on behind, bumping dangerously over the rough country road, but miraculously arriving with the precious freight intact. In his off hours that summer I taught him to sail a boat.

The limited expanse of the shallow waters of Mecox Bay gave Clara and me much enjoyment. One afternoon in rounding up to the mooring stake I gave up the tiller to her as usual and ran forward to grab at the stake, but lost my balance and clung frantically to the upright. Clara, laughing hysterically at the sight of my ludicrous predicament, lost her sense of direction and instead of rescuing me drove the boat ashore. And there I was, left with no alternative but to swim!

In the early fall we were back in New York and ready for work. A public recital of the Mannes Quartet at Mendelssohn Hall was planned in addition to new engagements in private houses. Since I had not the slightest financial backing for the Quartet, it was necessary for me personally to secure such engagements in order to keep the Quartet interested in giving even the insufficient hours for rehearsal. They were busy men, all in the Symphony Orchestra, and in addition they devoted many of their free hours to teaching.

Most of our rehearsals were held at night when we were tired and spent. It was a heart-breaking experience for us, with too little time for preparation. Lacking the routine of my colleagues in quartet playing, I still felt myself unworthy as a leader of these well-equipped musicians, and it was only in public performance that I showed any of the independence necessary. Then I drew desperately on a certain courage which came from rather unfixed ideals. My friends and well-wishers were enthusiastic, but I was left vulnerable to

several bitter shafts of criticism directed by those of more discriminating taste, or possibly those used to a more conventional standard of quartet playing: a performance which was meticulously finer but, in my opinion, lacking in freedom, poetic insight, and resonance. Nevertheless I persisted with a fortitude that seems amazing to me now.

Following the plan of the Kneisels, which our Quartet strongly admired, and against a better instinct, Richard Strauss, then in the country on tour, was engaged to play his piano quartet with us to draw public interest. We had only two rehearsals, the audience was meager, and the newspaper reviews the next morning were few in number and written perfunctorily in a spirit of barely passing interest. This occasion did nothing to enhance the reputation of our organization and at the end of the season, our second year together, it was disbanded. No support, insufficient public approbation, and most of all my lack of the background of quartet experience were the cause.

I can remember here and there, despite these serious handicaps, some outstandingly good performances. We had played a number of works then unknown to the public, including the quartet of that sterling Russian composer Taneiew, and we were told that our Quartet had elements of a refreshing freedom and a wholesome quality of sound not possessed by many a finer organization. I know now that with enough financial backing to insure a longer life for the Mannes Quartet, many of its artistic insufficiencies would

naturally have been smoothed out. I had, however, learned much, and in spite of a depressing memory I am glad to have known the pain of an impossible venture.

. . . . .

It was now that the children's orchestra, no longer a body of children, was merged into a new and larger organization which I had formed, and named "The Symphony Club," the erstwhile children forming the nucleus of a large string body numbering about thirty-five. Many very good players, mostly women trained for the musical profession and married now to men of means, found an outlet for their talents. Weekly rehearsals were held at the home of Mr. Charles T. Barney, whose daughter, a former pupil of mine, sat among the violins. Symphonic music was now our aim and ambition, for we intended to give symphony concerts for charitable purposes such as day nurseries for the poor and a home for crippled children. With the professional assistance of members of the Symphony Orchestra, players of reed, brass, and percussion instruments, also bass players, extra violas and 'celli, we gave a number of such concerts, the programs of which included soloists like Harold Bauer and Zimbalist, in concertos to which we played the accompaniment. These concerts yielded most adequate returns, for audiences filled the hall and boxes were sold at high prices. This was my first experience as a symphony conductor. Just as my previous work with settlement string orchestras was a preparation for The Symphony Club, so was this later activity the

forerunner of a future expansion as conductor—but that is a long way ahead. The Symphony Club maintained an active existence until America's entrance into the Great War. I resigned, and the following year the association was disbanded.

I was now under the management, as soloist, of the Wolfsohn Musical Bureau, where Richard Copley, then a young man, began his career as concert manager. One of the engagements received through them was to play at a musicale which Cissie Loftus, the actress, was giving; and strangely enough I was not to appear at her apartment until midnight. With my accompanist I arrived promptly at what seemed a very late hour for musical entertainment, to find no one but the colored maid present, and not a sign in evidence of the preparation for a coming festivity which, I was told, was to include supper for twenty guests. I waited until nearly one o'clock and then asked the maid when Miss Loftus and her guests were to arrive. She casually informed me that Miss Loftus was playing in Brooklyn and couldn't possibly get home until one o'clock. "Could I telephone?" I asked, for I felt that I ought to tell Clara not to expect me back much before sunrise. I was shown into the actress' sleeping quarters and found the telephone beside her bed. Calling my wife I told her of the unpropitious hour of this engagement. She asked, "Where are you now?" "In Cissie Loftus' bedroom," I answered. After an embarrassing interval in our telephone talk, I realized that explanations were in order, much to my wife's relief!

THIRTY-SIX

HUSBAND AND WIFE—VIOLIN AND PIANO

THE following summer we spent at Seal Harbor, Maine. I left, however, after a few weeks to meet the orchestra for a four weeks' engagement at the Exposition in Pittsburgh to include two concerts daily. Besides my position as concertmaster I now held that of assistant conductor, which I filled once in a while for half of the afternoon's program. The weather was increasingly hot, and had it not been for the unflagging interest and enthusiasm of an always closely-packed hall it would have been almost impossible to play in the sooty, humid atmosph[redacted].

At last those grilling weeks passed; and a bright[redacted], sunny morning found me in Seal Harbor with Clara, Tante, that captivating boy of ours, and Nana, his devoted colored nurse. In the weeks of my absence Clara had rented in a native's house, a short distance from the hotel, a room in which she had installed an upright piano, and which she used for practice every morning. I had looked forward during my exile to playing with her again.

The morning after my arrival we played some of the sonatas we most cared for. We chose the *G Major Sonata* of Brahms and were delighted with the ease and mutual understanding of the first movement. Suddenly, at the end of the movement, the door was thrown open violently and the woman of the house appeared, apparently greatly excited. Pointing her finger at me, and with a face distorted with passion, she said, "How dare you bring that devil's instrument into my house!" We were transfixed with surprise, so startled that we uttered no sound. I packed up my violin. Our garden had withered, and the hopes of many such daily communions were completely darkened. We left in sadness not unmixed with a feeling of hurt pride that our work had not only failed to receive its usual welcome but actually had met with acute dislike! We discovered later that our landlady was a very nervous and sickly woman and that the vibrations of the violin in that tiny wooden house were agony to her jangled nerves. After that we were able to play in the village schoolhouse.

[redacted]ordan Pond there was a charming tea-house, and I saw th[redacted]sibility of giving sonata concerts, not in the rooms, but on the wide porches which looked out on the mountain-rimmed lake and the distance beyond. The proprietor was interested in the plan and our friends urged us to play. To obtain the services of a resident secretary was an important factor. Fortunately someone suggested Miss Marion Claire Smith, then secretary to Dr. Christian Herter who had a home on the island. Miss Smith was willing to undertake the

management of these concerts. The results were excellent, for not alone were the financial returns surprisingly good, but a number of private engagements were the outcome of the enthusiastic reception given our programs. We remembered that on our engagement day Clara and I had resolved never to play in public together, but that determination was swept aside in the feeling that as ensemble players we had something to offer to a public unacquainted with some of the most beautiful compositions in musical literature.

With the exception of one summer spent in Belgium, for several years afterwards these sonata recitals were continued in a newly constructed music room with large plate-glass windows opening out on Jordan Pond.

THIRTY-SEVEN

THE FEDERATION OF MUSIC SCHOOL SETTLEMENTS IS BORN

Miss Smith had shown such excellent qualities in the management of these recitals that I suggested to Mrs. Howard Mansfield, then at Seal Harbor, that she be engaged as general secretary of the Music School Settlement, a position which she filled with fervid devotion and tireless interest for many years. Her particular understanding of my personal viewpoint and manner of carrying forward the philosophy of the work with the thousands of children who came to us for enlightenment through music was invaluable. In all those exciting years when the renown of the modest institution spread over a considerable area of the world, and forty-two similar schools were actually born in our own country, the assistance she rendered can hardly be estimated. For the purpose of our intercommunion with these individual efforts, Mrs. Mansfield and I were able to announce later the actual formation of the Federation of Music School Settlements. This not alone included all the existing schools, but offered to future ones the advantages of

advice based on our own experience. Conventions were held there and in other cities with programs including meetings and concerts by the pupils. Miss Smith had added to her strenuous days downtown the entire mechanical work of organizing this new and difficult activity.

There were no idle moments for me in the afternoons spent there, and many a quick action was necessary to avert physical or economic collapse of either a pupil in distress or someone in his or her immediate family circle. Threatened evictions were settled, and more serious still, critical operations were arranged for with surgeons of the highest repute who gave their valuable services. And many a medical head of a hospital found a bed for a suffering youngster when one seemed not to exist. I never appealed to these generous men in vain for such assistance. The more imposing their renown, the greater their alacrity, it seemed, in giving of their precious skill. Never was I so content as when it actually came to pass that through the link of a child, the whole family chain of father, mother, sister and relatives, became attached to us in a fine regard and affection.

A bright-eyed youngster came into the office one afternoon asking if he might have violin lessons. An instrument he had, but no money to pay for lessons. He was told that we could give no more scholarships but would place his name on the visiting list. He was visibly disappointed and asked plaintively how long he had to wait. On learning that the period was indefinite and might be prolonged a considerable length of time he left, with tears in his eyes.

His departure gave us keen regret that we were powerless to raise the hopes of this interesting youngster. Two weeks afterwards he reappeared, announcing joyfully that he had money and extracting from his pocket the amount of two dollars in coins of small denomination. He was sent to me to find out how he had gained possession of this, for him, so large a sum. After repeated questioning he told me the following story. His mother, finding it necessary to add to the meager income of a large family, had put up extra beds for which workers who came there only to sleep after a day of from twelve to fourteen hours in the sweatshops paid one dollar a week.

The boy conceived the plan of renting his own bed to an anxious lessee, receiving the usual one dollar a week; he himself sleeping on the floor of the tiny kitchen, perhaps dreaming of himself as a celebrated violinist! Needless to say he was admitted at once. Never had I seen a happier little face.

I remember him afterwards as a very intelligent youth, completing his public school course and later employed in an office downtown, joining the boys' club and the adult orchestra and on Sundays playing string quartets with his musical friends of the school. Such results gave me far greater satisfaction than if one had helped along a more talented student to a mediocre place as a professional musician. This way of living *with* music, instead of by it, was the light of our ambition, and I am content in the thought that the above case is not an isolated one but an example of the general rule.

Not only were these children anxious to make personal sacrifices, but at an early age they were able through individual initiative to put through their cherished desires, an example of the old adage: "Interest is the soul of will." Unlike the children living in great comfort, these took the care and trouble of their parents much to heart. They knew how much money came into the house, the burden of the cost of rent and food, which had to be shouldered by both their hard-working parents, and when these crushing loads had to be met. The fear of unemployment and sickness was the constant element in the general family discussion. Is it a wonder then that the frayed nerves of their elders made a life for these youngsters in which there was barely a kind word, and one where their education was gained in packed, ill-ventilated classrooms where they were simply one number in fifty or sixty? Small wonder they sought the haven of the well-kept and kindly atmosphere of the house on East Third Street, with trees in front of the attractive red brick façade, with windowsills banked with gay-looking geraniums, and a wide inviting door. That this once ugly and sordid street reacted to the neat and clean appearance of our building was only natural. The homes of our children also, in general, took on a more hopeful outlook; and the burden of many a wearied mother lightened when she heard her child practicing.

I remember so well the days and years you used to come home in the evening from Third Street. We lived on the

sixth floor of an apartment house on Amsterdam Avenue at Seventy-fifth Street. It was a hideous house—half red, half yellow brick; and the streets about it were dull and ugly. But the apartment itself had great warmth. Although nothing in it was of any great monetary or artistic value—and although we laugh rather kindly now about the golden oak in the dining-room and the potted ferns and that little den of yours plastered thick with signed photographs of musicians —even so, there was peace and unity in the large rooms. They had been lived in many years.

From the corner of the living room you could see down Amsterdam Avenue as far as the subway station at Seventy-second Street. Every evening around six o'clock Mother and I—and Puff, the big white Persian cat—would sit at the window seat and look for your home-coming. People would pour out of the subway and up the street in a long straggling line. Then suddenly, "There he is!" Mother would cry or sometimes I. And we were always just as excited to see you.

But often—even three blocks away—we could see how tired you were. In the cold winter evenings, dark at that hour, of course, we could see you as you passed the street lamps, your overcoat collar turned up, your thin face pinched and whitish, your shoulders a little bowed.

THIRTY-EIGHT

HUMAN DOCUMENT

AMONG the many hundreds of interesting experiences at East Third Street, I choose one that I think particularly significant of the school's influence. A card was brought to me one day while I was teaching, and on it was written, "Please advise bearer what to do." The message was signed by a former fellow-student of mine in the days I had studied with Carl Richter. Following the card there came into the room a rather fine-looking man of about fifty. At a sign from me, my pupil left the room and the stranger said: "Mr. Mannes, I was told that though you took only young people as pupils you would at least listen to me, and that I could depend upon your help and advice as to what I should do."

I asked him to play and he unpacked his violin. In a minute or less I saw that his accomplishment embraced only the rudiments of violin playing and not much more in the knowledge of music itself. "I know," he said, "that I know nothing about the violin and less about music, but I've always loved it beyond all things in this world, and since the age of

Clara Damrosch Mannes

eighteen I haven't had the opportunity to study. I've heard about your work with the children, and I should like to be one of them despite my age. I am so anxious to start at the beginning and work my way up as if I were a boy again; in fact I want to be where there are many such happy children as I have seen coming into these doors for the past few days. It has taken me at least a week to gain the courage to enter here." He wanted to pay enough for his lessons to enable a child or two to have free lessons. He was promptly enrolled and his hour-lesson schedule arranged. He took his leave in rather a thoughtful manner and after a curious hesitation, as if he had something on his mind that needed saying but which he had later decided not to say.

While I was thinking of the strange impression my unusual visitor had made upon me, the door was gently opened after a faint rap, and my stranger reappeared. "I beg your pardon," he said, most apologetically, "but before I go on with this I've got to feel that I am giving you as fair a deal as you've given me. When I've told you my history, I don't believe you'll want me among the young people here in this wonderful place." I assured him that I needed to know nothing but his earnest and sincere love of music for its own sake, of which I felt certain; that I needed no account of his life previous to the present moment. His insistence that his peace of mind depended on his telling me of his life brought the following story:

In a town of Pennsylvania his father owned a small saloon in which the son served after school hours as bartender so

that his father might get a few hours of rest during the long day of serving beer and drinks. He was then just eighteen years of age. His father had told him that his property was not only heavily mortgaged but in danger of foreclosure. This preyed on the boy's mind and made him a pliant tool in assisting a young and good-for-nothing friend of his in committing a crime for which he had to suffer for the rest of his life. To the knowledge of this tempter had come the following fact: an old lady had drawn her entire deposit from the local bank, intending to leave the next morning for New York. Both boys secured entrance into her home and while he kept watch below, his chum went upstairs. A shriek rang out through the open windows into the summer night. The watcher below ran to the street in terror and into the arms of a policeman. The old lady had been smothered with a pillow. My gentle visitor paused. "From eighteen to fifty I served on my life sentence thirty-two years, most of that time as accountant in the prison office with the special privileges of a 'trusty.' "

At last he was pardoned and on account of his fine prison record and experience as a bookkeeper the warden secured a similar position for him with a large transportation company in New York doing night duty. "Now will you take me knowing of my past?" he said. "Now, knowing it," I said, "I give you even a warmer welcome."

He came to the school three or four times weekly for his violin, piano and theory lessons, and was very much liked; and while he possessed no real talent, his tremendous interest

and application made him an acceptable student. His dream all those years behind the bars had come true. No one knew his story except myself. It was impressive his saying to me at the end of his tale, "Do not feel sorry for me, for if I have all through those years lost physical freedom, I am the gainer of its spiritual counterpart."

The last time I saw him he was in the Junior Orchestra conducted by Mr. Stowell, seated next to a little girl with a pink bow in her hair, so deeply engrossed that for him the visible world had dissolved into unalloyed joy. The gates of another prison had opened for him.

The professional mind would in all probability have refused this man of no talent musical education. And there were plenty then who thought an act like this wasted effort. Perhaps it produced no Heifetzes—but is that the only end of teaching music?

In April of that year we sailed with Leopold, then a child of three, and Nana his nurse, for Brussels where I was to study with Ysaye for six months. From this illuminating companionship I drew untold value, long afterwards even more than at the time itself. His art and his vision of it were too great for me to absorb at once. Most of it was left to be drawn upon like a deep and inexhaustible mine, still—after all these years—yielding riches. At Godinne on the Meuse I continued my lessons. With him now Clara played the *Kreutzer* and César Franck sonatas, a never failing remembrance of sheer, illuminating beauty for her.

THIRTY-NINE

SONATA RECITALS—DAVID AND CLARA MANNES

Upon our return to New York, Mrs. Mansfield suggested that we give a series of six sonata recitals for the benefit of the Settlement School. We played these in the spacious and very beautiful music room in the home of Mrs. Charles T. Barney at Park Avenue and Thirty-ninth Street. The series was very successful and the programs interesting, for they were chronologically arranged from the early Italian masters down through Brahms and César Franck.

There followed now, out of the general interest in our playing, a demand for sonata recitals which under the management of Mrs. Frances Seaver and later under Haensel and Jones, developed into concert tours which took us as far west as Kansas City, south as St. Louis, north as Bangor, and included public recitals of our own financial venturing in New York, Boston and Philadelphia. We were now playing over forty concerts a season.

A year or two later we gave a series of Sunday night sonata

recitals at the Belasco Theatre. Besides possessing a repertoire of something like sixty works, we played for the first time in public concerts in New York compositions in the classical form by Enesco, Lekeu, Henius, Carpenter and Mason.

Sonatas now began to appear on the recital program of the violin virtuosi in America for the first time, and nearly all the literature we played, whether it was Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Brahms, or the old Italian masters, was new to more than nine-tenths of our audiences. The fairly familiar sonatas were the Tartini *Devil's Trill*, one or two Handel sonatas, and, of Beethoven, only the *Kreutzer* sonata. We were the first to give entire sonata programs of Beethoven, and once in a while a whole program was devoted to the three Brahms sonatas. At a recital in Aeolian Hall we played the *G major* and *A major* sonatas of Brahms, with one of the clarinet sonatas, where the viola was substituted for the clarinet. Our tours lasted sometimes two or three weeks, and we indulged ourselves by traveling most comfortably either in a drawing-room or a compartment.

It was not always possible for the management to secure consecutive dates on tour. Often we had to make such long unbroken hops as New York to St. Louis, arriving there at 6:30 P.M. and leaving directly after the concert. On one of these occasions the check we received bounced back a few days after its deposit at our bank, to our justifiable dismay. The Kneisel Quartet had fared in the same manner only a week before, and had written us a dire warning, but the

letter came too late. This was the only experience of the kind, however, during the many years of our concertizing—and is no reflection on St. Louis!

These tours were a period of relaxation for us, for we were without worry about our boy, and later on his little sister, feeling entirely secure in the punctilious care and devotion given them by Tante and Nana. I have always loved riding in a train and looking out at a strange passing landscape, and Clara was then—as she is now—an inveterate traveler. We had all sorts of adventures on these tours: giant blizzards that held us snowbound, amazing human contacts in isolated western university towns, great hospitality from utter strangers, and the general excitement of pioneering. Everywhere we went I was interviewed by the newspapers in relation to the Music School Settlement, and once in a while I responded to an invitation to talk at some local meeting of a club, even at a Board of Trade in the Middle West. Through such experiences I lost my early fear of making public addresses.

The summer of 1904 was spent in a rented camp about a mile from Basin Harbor on Lake Champlain, near Strong's boarding-house where, some twelve years before, I had stayed an entire summer. Then I was rather a sad and forlorn young man. Now, in looking back, it was this very period of a dozen years that had changed me from an immature and confused young violinist into a man—and I hope a musician—of responsibility.

The grounds of this quite primitive cottage, dotted with

majestic trees, ran down to massive shelving rocks abutting on the waters of Lake Champlain, over whose changing surface one's gaze sped to the mellow-tinted outline of the distant Adirondacks.

Down there by the lake I see Leopold sitting with his grandmother, or with Tante, either fine gray head close to the auburn curls of their small idol, singing with him the songs and interval exercises out of a book, and beating time to preserve the rhythmic value of the notes. Little Leopold, aged four and a half, was having his daily sight-singing lesson. All of the previous winter he claimed the piano almost as his plaything, making experiments on his own account. And since he heard music as a natural part of his daily life and was taken to an occasional afternoon concert, he already knew the instruments of the orchestra and had a keen interest in different instrumental combinations. Sometimes after the concert he was taken back to the conductor's room to see me. After one particular concert, conducted by Felix Weingartner, at which there had been an excitingly beautiful and majestic performance of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Leopold rushed into the room, went straight up to the celebrated leader and said, "Mr. Weingartner, that was the best playing of the Fifth Symphony I have ever heard." "You dear boy," exclaimed the conductor, taking him up in his arms.

Among those who paid court to young Leopold was George Henschel, then in New York teaching singing at the Institute of Musical Art. This justly celebrated musician

came every Sunday morning to take Leopold for a walk along Riverside Drive. He delighted to probe this young and avid mind for reactions, particularly musical; for he was interested in the manifestations of a preordained musical gift and had assured us of the boy's unusual talent. At all events, it was a touching sight to see these queerly matched two marching off for a weekly ramble in mutually pleasurable anticipation.

With one European experience already behind him, and the many impressions coming into his few years of existence, this boy's sensitive spirit, instead of being complicated and taxed, seemed only to have become normalized, to have resolved itself into unusual balance. His devoted mother was now bearing another child, and we were already planning for an eventful winter.

Our next-door neighbors at the lake that summer were Dr. Nathan Oppenheim and his wife, whom Clara had known as a young girl. Dr. Oppenheim was a very distinguished physician and to us a very stimulating friend. Towards the middle of the summer we were startled by the abrupt entrance of Mrs. Oppenheim's maid, telling us in great excitement that the doctor had hurt himself with a hatchet while splitting kindling wood, and asking would I come at once. When I went into our neighbor's sitting-room I saw him seated at the table, holding a bloody hand, his wife frightened, pale and almost fainting. She begged me to wash my hands in a bowl of antiseptic solution, which, after scrubbing my hands, I did. Approaching the doctor I saw needles,

forceps and gut spread out on the table. I followed the doctor's directions and took three stitches in the back of the hand above the index and second fingers. I, who could not bear the sight of blood, performed my first and only surgical operation, not without a dread foreboding as to the probability of the permanent disability of the doctor's hand. A week later I was overjoyed to see my doctor-patient wiggle his fingers in pleasurable glee. I had by the greatest good luck done a good job.

The next summer, 1905, saw us installed, with our family now including a beautiful and obstreperous daughter seven months old, in a cottage enlarged and remodeled for us, situated on an attractive tree-lined shore of three and a half acres, with a separate study for me under the trees two hundred feet distant. It was a snug and rather complete summer home for us, possessing a very neat cottage the walls of which were unsealed, the naked pine partitions stained an attractive green, the living room dominated by a beautiful stone fireplace and a large Steinway grand piano.

Our very attractive neighbor this time was an Episcopalian minister, with his family including his wife and four children under the age of eighteen. They were all fond of good music and it was only natural when Clara and I played that they sat outside, all of them, under adjacent trees, listening. They were invited in and became the nucleus of a large gathering at regular recitals lasting an hour on Sunday mornings at eleven o'clock.

By word of mouth it was widely circulated up and down

the lake that people were welcome, and soon our dock was lined with motors and rowboats and canoes. On the field, in the rear, were wagons that had carried our farmer neighbors over many a mile. In many cases the farmers brought lunch with them, and asked permission to remain on the place after the recital to camp out for an hour or two. People came from as far as Burlington.

These occasions were weekly milestones for us, to which we looked forward and which we enjoyed inasmuch as we brought for the first time to many in this mixed gathering the works of Handel, Mozart, Bach, Beethoven, Brahms and César Franck. The series of about eight programs was given for three consecutive summers, the term of our leasehold of this cottage near Basin Harbor.

Leopold turned pages for his mother and naturally absorbed the music at first hand in hearing and in sight. These occasions rest in our memory, perhaps not so much for the music itself as for the gathering of people devoid of social considerations who came over many a mile of land and water to bathe in the never ceasing stream of inspiration of these deathless composers. Tante was the lovely hostess, welcoming the people, mostly strangers, with that charming and warm hospitality that came so naturally to her, for she loved people, all kinds of people. And she in turn became to them one of the chief attractions of our household.

FORTY

GUSTAV MAHLER: ISADORA DUNCAN

THERE was practically no change in my varied schedule of work with the exception of the Symphony Orchestra, where, as I said, I played fewer concerts, never omitting, however, those of the Young People's Series or those of the Musical Art and the Oratorio Societies. I foresaw my giving up all orchestra work, much as I loved it.

A few unusual episodes during the last years of my association with the orchestra included the appearances of Gustav Mahler as guest conductor with whom I had a very pleasant relationship. Playing under the leadership of such inspiring men as Weingartner and Mahler taught me more about conducting than all the books I could have read; and to these men I owe my conception of what a symphonic conductor's personal strength and singleness of purpose mean to each individual player in the orchestra. Until a conductor had this artistic hold over the men, his knowledge of music might count for nothing. Damrosch, Seidl, Weingartner, Muck, Mahler, and, of course, Nikisch, had the inherent

quality that makes leaders of men, and I am quite certain that in any other vocation or profession they would not have been time-servers. It was more than interesting, it was assuredly revealing, to watch these men at rehearsals, for their methods of drilling the orchestra were as unlike each other's as were their features. It was at these times that I received the true measure of these men in action; it was then that their musical intentions were made clearer to us than at most of the concerts.

Mr. Damrosch, who never failed in courage in bringing about an unprecedented entertainment in musical form, engaged the dancer, Isadora Duncan, for a number of appearances with the orchestra at Carnegie Hall; and in spite of gloomy forecasts, the association was a brilliant success, not alone in launching Miss Duncan's great personal popularity in this country, but in presenting a perfect musical setting through which her great interpretive art shone with alluring radiance.

One night after dinner at Mr. Damrosch's house, she said she would dance if Mr. Damrosch would play for her. Every portable accessory of the large room was carried out, the guests sat on the floor, and the lights were turned lower. Then followed, for about fifteen minutes, one of the most extraordinary and beautiful impressions of artistic intention among my recollections. When she was pressed for a repetition, she came to me, asking me to play something alone for her. My violin being in the house, I stood, at her direction, in the center of the room, playing a movement or two

from the Bach solo sonatas. At the end she asked me to repeat this at the Metropolitan Opera House the following evening when she was to give her next recital. My declining this honor (I did not think that these rare moments could be recreated) prompted her to make the unusual offer of giving me half the receipts of the house.

Many years later I was in your room at the Music School when a secretary said, "Miss Duncan to see you, Mr. Mannes." "Can I stay, Father?" I begged, goggle-eyed with excitement. "Of course."

A big woman came in with coarse red hair looped under a big, black dusty hat. Her voice was hoarse and deep. "David," she cried, going to you, "dear, wonderful David!" And she embraced you, and I was appalled—not at the embrace, but—being too young to understand—at the ruin of a vision both of us had once seen on the stage, in front of tall curtains, in a golden light.

FORTY-ONE

I RESIGN FROM THE SYMPHONY

Our tours were now devoted to programs made up of excerpts from Wagner's *Parsifal*, given with the assistance of about six or eight singers, with the orchestra on the stage and the soloists in evening dress. These concerts were financially successful, for the American public as a whole had no opportunity of hearing Wagner's last great work. Church-going people crowded the auditorium and gave themselves to the religious import of this confession of faith of the great master. In the middle of the program I always played Wilhelmj's arrangement of the *Good Friday Spell;* and had I given a wonderful performance of Beethoven's violin concerto, acclamations of approval could not have been greater. And so for weeks and weeks I played this solo, until my very soul turned, for it was, I thought, a success unworthy of the artist which I hoped to become. I even resented being called the "Spell Binder" by members of the orchestra.

My longing for home life was really the essential background to everything I did. No public success which meant

even a temporary loss of these ties could have compensated me for such absences which would follow in the wake of distinction of a great soloist. The very elements I lacked, such as brilliancy of performance, and an egocentric type of mind, seemed to me now a blessing in disguise, leaving me free to build my own life in exact conformity to a philosophy evidently inherent in me.

In 1912 I resigned from the New York Symphony Orchestra as a necessary though regrettable step. I had realized for several years that in giving my interest in so many different directions, none of them could receive adequate attention and service. I had completed my seventeen years in the orchestra, ten of which I had served as concertmaster, a period embracing a lifetime of interest in a music world of its own to which I bore an intimate and an absorbing relation. There was very little symphonic or choral music I had not played. In retrospect, mine was the privilege of knowing and hearing the greatest artists living in those seventeen years. It was by no means all easy sailing, but obstacles were somehow surmounted through the tact, wisdom and resourcefulness of our directing conductor. And it is to his steadfast and inventive qualities that the orchestra lived through a series of crises that would have undone a less valiant spirit. I was sorry, very sorry, to leave my comrades, many of them dear friends.

I don't remember the actual time when you told us you were giving up your orchestra job in the Symphony. But I

do know that it must have depressed me greatly. For it was very glamourous seeing you sitting at the first stand at the concerts. You were so slim and I liked the way one long leg was stretched in front of you, and the other bent back, with the foot resting against a chair-spoke. And the full dress looked very elegant, with the tails falling down behind the chair.

We would always sit in the same box—Mother, Tante, Leopold and I. And when you were tuning up, or between compositions, or afterwards, bowing, you would look up at us and smile.

And when you played the Good Friday Music from Parsifal *Mother and Tante would always weep a little. I was awed myself, not only by the music but by the unearthly purity of your tone. It was* your *"piece."*

Too little is known of the life of an orchestra musician, undistinguished (most of them), his individual and important efforts never noticed in print, his rare reward a smile from the conductor as high approval of his playing in some small solo passage. Never publicized in his prompt attendance at rehearsals and concerts when in agonized worry over some critical trouble in his crowded home, or his playing in actual pain and seeking no excuse for a pardonably indifferent performance. Among the valued lessons of my life were these examples of stoicism under the grueling, harsh inhumanity of a soulless conductor, or a succession of conductors who lacked the imagination to realize that in forcing the orchestra

to achieve their own personal success, they lost the only medium—that of kindness and consideration—which is vitally necessary to a perfect ensemble; and which creates a self-imposed discipline through united enthusiasm and effort.

An orchestra engagement of thirty or forty weeks at a salary just big enough to meet the current budget of family expenses left nothing over for the man's livelihood for the remaining twenty or more weeks of the year. Summer engagements, mostly of a depressing and inartistic character, are resorted to, and in order to secure these, hundreds of competent players made daily morning visits to the Musical Protective Union to pick up sporadic engagements from the few musical activities that remain in the life of music in a great city during the summertime. The few fortunate ones securing radio engagements are indeed lucky, being financially secure if spiritually depressed by the absence of human reaction—that magic tension between performer and listener which no mechanical reproduction can possibly achieve.

FORTY-TWO

HAMPTON INSTITUTE: MY COLORED FRIENDS

AMONG the many friends I had talked to about John Douglas, the colored friend and teacher of my boyhood, were George Foster Peabody and Natalie Curtis. They had long been deeply interested in Hampton Institute, the great industrial school for colored people near Old Point Comfort, Virginia. They begged Clara and me to come and play on Commencement Day at Hampton. We left with a large party which included a number of well-known people, among them Dr. Felix Adler. Apparently Mr. Peabody had related to Adler the story of Douglas and had asked for fuller details.

In the middle of the program Clara and I played facing the rising tiers of nine hundred Negro and one hundred Indian students. Back of us was an audience of several thousand. The tremendous applause which continued for some time was almost unnerving, for it had the spasmodic violence of claps of thunder. After many an acknowledging bow, this unusual response to our playing only subsided when

Dr. Felix Adler came upon the platform holding up his hand for silence.

"My friends," he said, "I want to tell you an interesting story which I know you will appreciate and take to heart. Many years ago in a sordid street in New York, a colored man listened to the sound of a violin coming through an open window." He was telling them of my colored friend, how he taught me for the sheer love of imparting knowledge to a poor, unguided boy who dreamed and loved music. He went on. "This is a unique story as you must all agree, for a Negro gave an unasked-for cultural lift to a puzzled white boy. Unfortunately, the colored benefactor passed away not so many years afterward, but"—he paused—"the white boy of that generation has just played to you."

The silence following Dr. Adler's descent from the platform was more emotionally shattering than anything I had hitherto experienced; I was moved to my very soul. I remember being dazed and silent and can recollect only that one of the many students surrounding me asked me to let him see my violin which then passed among the others; and so careful of the instrument were they that it came back to me unscathed and still in perfect tune.

By this time, however, I felt more than dazed; I was actually ill from emotional exhaustion. And Clara had me taken to my room and the doctor summoned. After examination, he said that I was to keep to my bed for at least two days. Dear Dr. Frissel, president of the university, came to me

several times. His visits gave me joy: his great benignity of mind and soul were very comforting. On one of the evenings of my short convalescence the choir came and most beautifully sang outside my windows many of their spirituals.

Among my friends who knew of my affection and interest for the colored race some tried to discourage any intention of mine to help the cause of education among the Negroes. They would say that the colored man was incapable of realizing advantages because of physical and intellectual barriers that were the biological inheritance of the race. I remembered Douglas, however, and felt that I had known intimately at least one representative of the race who had achieved cultural and intellectual individuality, and if so, others might follow, and even surpass, his unusually high accomplishment. I think artists like Roland Hayes, Paul Robeson, Marian Anderson, Harry Burleigh, and James Weldon Johnson, the poet, have more than proved this contention. They are interpreters of the first magnitude, regardless of race and color.

FORTY-THREE

MUSIC IN HARLEM

BEFORE a group of interested friends, and those particularly zealous for the cultural advancement of the colored race, Natalie Curtis, George Foster Peabody, Dr. Felix Adler, Elbridge Adams, and Mrs. Percival Knauth, I laid the cherished plan of founding the Music Settlement for Colored People in memory of my old friend and teacher, John Douglas. Ways and means were discussed, a board of trustees chosen, and soon afterward added to by an equal number of prominent colored people. It was my task, and not an easy one, to engage the colored faculty. A house in Harlem was leased, and pianos installed.

The faculty was soon at work under the direction of David Martin, a former letter carrier, always a lover of music and for a number of years an enthusiastic violin student. I was able to arrange for further and more intensive study for him at the Institute of Musical Art.

There were in Harlem a number of excellent musicians, men and women, whom our young director knew; and since the faculty was to comprise people of his race, he was

given authority to make the necessary arrangements with them. After some shifting of time I was able to spend three hours weekly at the little house on West One Hundred and Twenty-first Street where the director's family also had their living quarters.

In changing the days of my visits as often as possible I could supervise the work, and play an hour of quartet music with three men of the faculty. Mr. Weir, violinist, and Mr. Jeter, the 'cellist, both very talented and musically adept players, were enthusiastic comrades who worked with amazing fervor at those rehearsals. It was for them the first opportunity of its kind. Since these informal meetings were open to our friends in the neighborhood, we played in a tightly packed but quiet room. Among our constant visitors was the minister of a neighboring colored church who after the close of a Haydn adagio stood up and said, "I or no other minister of God's church could preach as good a sermon as that which we have just listened to."

I was always comforted by the thought that the Negro's idea of music in his native sense was intensely religious, and that the majority of them, especially the women, deplored the existence and popularity of jazz music. The high artistic value of the spiritual attests the fact of their fine sense of musical proportion and a naïve devotional quality.

On one of the rare occasions when I was playing with the trio of the faculty and we were alone, rehearsing an allegro movement of a Haydn quartet, I called a halt and said to the viola player, "Mr. Washington, why do you always

drag?" In an inimitable southern dialect and with great unction he answered: "Why Mr. Mannes, you seem to forget one important characteristic in viola playing." "And, pray, what is that?" "Why, the viola always drags, doesn't it?"

After a year of promising growth our school unfortunately was in danger of dissolution through growing dissensions between our director, his faculty, and the board of trustees—a battle which assumed political proportions. After attempts at a possible agreement proved futile, it was decided to accept Mr. Martin's tender of resignation, whereupon he started a school on his own responsibility and we were left to consider the alternative of leaving the field entirely to Mr. Martin or resuming our work in other quarters. The latter course was adopted among us unanimously.

A double building was bought under a heavy mortgage on West One Hundred and Thirty-first Street, and Rosamond Johnson placed in charge as director, with a new faculty. A long life for our venture seemed promised. The faculty was decidedly better and our quarters spacious and attractive. The parents of our pupils showed a fine pride in paying the small fee we demanded for lessons, and rarely was there any hint of asking for scholarships. The modest and well-bred demeanor of our pupils was proverbial. Clothes were well brushed and clean linen the rule. Soft voices and the complete lack of rowdyism prevailed. I sometimes went to tea in colored homes and came away with a feeling of great inner satisfaction at the charm, ease, and grace of manner these people possessed.

After an informal concert of the pupils, a teacher of many instruments, mainly strings, began, meditatively, "Dr. Mannes—" I broke in, "Please do not call me Doctor. I have no such title of distinction, no degree." "Well," he said, "we've got to call you something to show you our respect." He seemed puzzled when I said that true respect needed no such label, that trust and confidence were born of another dimension. "That's just what I wanted to talk to you about," he said. "Don't you think that music without soul is worthless?" When I asked him what *he* meant by "soul," he remained silent, then, looking at me, said, very softly, "I think that the soul is like a kite which most people fly only after they are dead."

FORTY-FOUR

BIG JIM EUROPE

AMONG the remarkably individual characters that stand outlined in my memories of the experience in Harlem is James Reese Europe, conductor of the Clef Club, a large orchestra of the best colored musicians in New York, among whom were several gifted composers. Europe and I became friends. It was his suggestion that the Clef Club play for the benefit of the Music School.

In following out this suggestion Elbridge Adams of our committee engaged Carnegie Hall with the privilege of using it for several all-day rehearsals, the necessity for which Europe made clear to us. The orchestra being composed of professional jazz-players, barbers, waiters, red-caps, bell-hops and such, it was possible for them to attend rehearsals only at times when they were free. The orchestra, then, could only be rehearsed in sections, men dropping in at odd moments, in a seemingly lackadaisical manner, to receive individual instruction and then to be rehearsed in groups. Even in the final rehearsal, the orchestra was not complete. I wondered if this scattered and disorderly rehearsal attendance could produce anything but chaos.

Mr. Europe called for fourteen upright pianos which Elbridge Adams, a high official of the American Piano Company, provided with alacrity. These pianos were placed back to back and were played by fourteen of the best jazz players in town. Two hours before the end of the final rehearsal, late in the afternoon, a few of us came to listen to those sixty-five men playing bandolas, guitars, a few violins, 'celli, a few basses, flutes, saxophones and one bassoon (the player having learnt to master its participation in the program in a week's time). The large battery of drums and traps was very imposing and seductively rhythmic. In addition to their orchestral numbers, they sang while playing, and the wonder of it was that some of the fine bass voices were among the performers of instruments scored in the treble clef, and vice versa.

Very few people realize how difficult it is, for instance, to play the violin and to sing simultaneously the harmonically correct bass passages. The great surprise to the listener, however, was the beautiful, soft sound of this strange conglomeration of unassorted instruments. Its only prototype in tone is the Russian balalaika orchestra.

And big Jim Europe was an amazingly inspiring conductor. Of a statuesquely powerful build, he moved with simple and modest grace, always dominating this strange assemblage before him with quiet control. The hall was packed from the floor to the roof, thousands being turned away for lack of even standing room. The receipts of this concert netted close to five thousand dollars, a great help to the

school. Besides which, a wedge in opening the public halls and theatres to colored performers had been made.

Europe and I talked of working towards a plan of building a large structure in Harlem, containing besides a concert hall and theatre a library devoted to all printed matter concerning the colored race. It was also to be a focal point and a sort of northern clearing house for Hampton, Fisk, Tuskegee and other schools and movements devoted to the Negro. In short, a national home for his best interests.

In order to foster the pride of these million people, the plan made it absolutely necessary that they should finance and build to the exclusion of white assistance. Europe said it could be done through the colored man's talents, and that he would do all he could to bring about the building of such a noble monument. Had he lived I do not doubt that in Harlem, now, such a dream would become an imposing and a beautiful reality.

Shortly afterwards the school was given over to the colored trustees with Rosamond Johnson continuing as director, and I omitted my regular visits. In the first place it was a constant irritation to me that lack of spare time forced me to devote the minimum personal attention to work as important as this. In the second place, the colored people were desirous of assuming complete control. Six months after our departure, the school closed its doors, much to my disappointment, not to speak of those of my friends who had given so much time and disinterested effort to the upbuilding of a home of musical culture.

In Harlem today there is further need of such a place. The founding of our school came into life at least twenty years too soon. James Reese Europe during the war became General Pershing's famous bandmaster. After the Armistice, on tour with his band, he met his death in Boston in his dressing-room after the concert. The band's drummer had stabbed him to the heart.

FORTY-FIVE

MUSIC AT SING SING

THROUGH Thomas Mott Osborne, the remarkably liberal and human-hearted warden at Sing Sing and an old friend of my wife, I made arrangements to bring the Symphony Club to the prison. Eighteen hundred prisoners were seated in the hall without the depressing influence of the guards. This was one of many customs inaugurated during Mr. Osborne's tenure of office. The prisoners gave us rapt attention and always a thunderous applause.

My sympathies became involved and active in securing with others a pardon from Governor Whitman for an attractive-looking Italian, leader of the prison band. When he left Sicily for America at the age of eighteen, his father bidding him good-by at Palermo said to him, "Guiseppe, look out for the police in New York, be a good boy and do not get into their clutches." Arriving in New York entirely ignorant of the English language, he naturally associated with his countrymen. Once, when he was in a large group of them, a violent altercation arose. A piercing shriek split the air, and the group quickly dispersed, running wildly off in

all directions. The boy of eighteen, transfixed with terror, was left standing over a lifeless body.

It was easy to arrest him, he offered no resistance, could say nothing; he seemed to be in a trance. His trial followed immediately, and through an interpreter he could only protest his innocence. But circumstantial evidence was complete. He was condemned (his youth saved him from the electric chair) to serve a life sentence, which he began on the day following his trial.

Having played the trumpet in the village band in Sicily, his one talent became useful in the prison band, and indirectly, eleven years afterwards, was the means of securing his unconditional release. His musical experience and resourceful vivacity soon brought him forward as a leader among his mates, and when I met him at the age of twenty-nine he had developed this band into a very creditable organization.

With the willingness of Warden Osborne, it was possible to bring a local teacher into the prison to help the young man to the musical knowledge he so strongly wished. Then I began to beg the music publishers for an extended library and for additional instruments, all of which were most generously given. The last information I had concerning Guiseppe was that, surrounded by a complete family circle of his own, he was the owner of a respectable and fairly lucrative business somewhere in the Middle West, happy and contented. I hope he still plays upon his trumpet, and looks upon it as the precious symbol of his deliverance.

In the prison yard and in those fearsome cells I came upon a condition of mental anguish that baffles the telling. Slowly, inch by inch, the Christlike understanding of a fearless soul brought about better conditions and a more humane treatment of these human derelicts, not alone in Sing Sing but in England, and all over the world. The memory of Thomas Mott Osborne is secure. His work, though he is gone, is only begun.

. . . . .

Of the many experiences that came to me through my association with the penitentiary is the following human document, which I am impelled to tell not because it is more remarkable than others, but because it is connected, curiously enough, with my early boyhood. After playing a complete program for the assembled eighteen hundred prisoners later on, I left the stage and passed down the aisle to the exit. Halfway to the door, I heard a voice, "David, for God's sake, come here." An outstretched hand caught mine, and I was pulled into a seat made vacant next to a gray-haired inmate.

"Look at me, don't you know me, don't you remember Ben . . . ? My father kept a store on Seventh Avenue, near Twenty-fourth Street, and I used to play baseball with your brothers. I saw very little of you. You were skinny and looked sick and you played the fiddle. You somehow never mixed up with us."

I now looked closely at him. He was heavy-set and quite

gray, a "lifer." He had been at Sing Sing since his youth. "You broke me all up," he said. "Listening to you play, remembering the old days, your father and mother, mine . . . You know, it's funny, but why wasn't I up on the stage, like you, tonight, and you here in my place. I guess it's just like this: you kept good company, and I the worst; but I didn't know it." He smiled wryly.

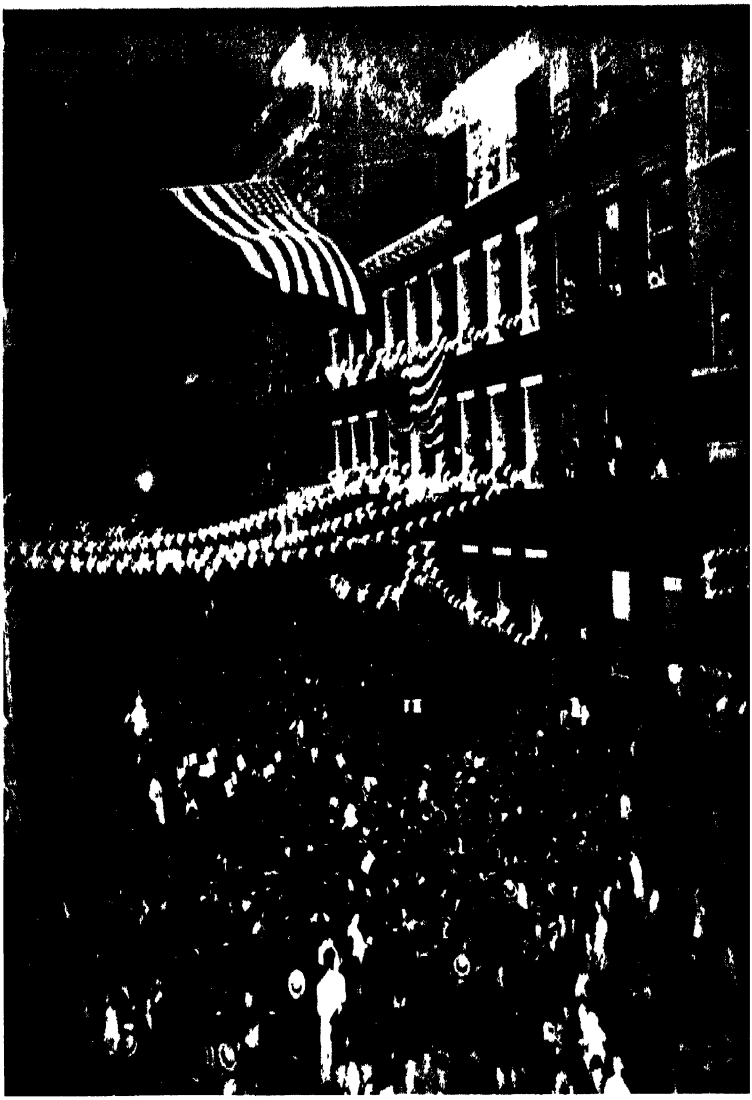
"But how did it actually happen," I asked, "your being sent here?"

"The promise of easy money. It's most always that, easy money . . . My God . . . You'll come again, David, won't you?" I promised.

Bad company: and here was an institution among many built by the crazy philosophy of a Christendom to exaggerate this accident of environment by packing thousands of human beings in more wholesale conditions of "bad company."

This is where humanity should start to clean house, and cast to the rubbish heap its mental concept of prison, substituting schools instead; schools of different categories according to the mental fitness of their pupils; schools to awaken laudable ambition for a new life instead of our dungeons of despair.

How long will it take to make this civilized world realize its losing fight against criminality, to make over its police and judiciary systems, to lead toward rehabilitation instead of damnation?



Music School Settlement Street Concert, About June, 1910

FORTY-SIX

THE SETTLEMENT THRIVES: THEODORE ROOSEVELT

GOING straight to my work in East Third Street made me realize with great joy that the Settlement School, while representing an infinitesimal cog of the great wheel of life, offered a wonderful element of protection for the young and unguided life entrusted to our care.

We were at this time much occupied in preparing for a public concert to be given in Carnegie Hall. Both the Senior and the Junior Orchestras were to be combined in a program for string orchestra by Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Handel, and in the accompaniment of Percy Grainger's playing of his own piano music. Mr. Grainger had most generously offered his services as assisting artist.

It was an afternoon concert and the hall was crowded with people of all ages and condition. The great and sincere applause was very exhilarating to our young players and stimulated them to the best performance in my experience with them.

Our next venture was to be a "street concert," planned to take place on the eve of Decoration Day. Thousands of lamps were to be stretched across the street, which was to be closed to traffic by the Police Department, and the neighbors were asked to take part by decorating their windows with colored lamps. On the appointed evening, orchestra and chorus assembled in the building, and as the stands and chairs were being arranged on the asphalt a heavy downpour of rain came and continued so long that the concert was postponed to the next evening, when again, with everything in readiness, the same thing occurred.

Again a postponement. The following night, in beautiful weather, the street a blaze of light, we played and our chorus sang to the motionless attention of crowded sidewalks, kept in orderly alignment by an interested and kindly platoon of police. The windows of adjacent houses were crowded with beaming faces, and over the cornices of the roofs hung the heads of hundreds of men and boys, their faces aglow from the hundreds of incandescent bulbs beneath them. One had to think of them as living, highly interesting sculptured gargoyles. As a closing number we played and our chorus sang the old Jewish hymn, *Hatikvo*, and to our great joy the people on the street, the old people in the windows, those on the roofs, joined in the mighty chorus. It was an unforgettable incident.

Our neighbors now understood us, and were indeed our friends, showing it by helping to keep the street clean and free from the disfiguring elements of rubbish, ashes, etc. One

of our youths whom I had advised years before to go to Cooper Institute to learn some mechanical craft (he was a musical enthusiast) now came to me, saying that he had a good position in the paving department of the city's public works as a result of his training at the institute, and that our street was slated for a new paving. "What type of pavement do you want?" he asked. East Third Street was laid with smooth asphalt one week later. And this was the boy whom I had discouraged as a professional musician, to his great disappointment at the time. He is at present a very successful building contractor, but has not forgotten his violin.

. . . . .

In the winter of 1912–13 there came in the strangest way the fulfillment of a desire sustained for over twenty-five years: to meet and know Theodore Roosevelt. As far back in the past as when he was Police Commissioner he seemed to me the ideal public servant, courageous and true in the performance of duty as he saw it.

I had, as a young man, enthusiastic moments that gave me, too, the courage of which he seemed to be the embodiment; and which made me feel that I must go down to Mulberry Street to tell him how much I admired him. But since fear controlled most of my impulses, the years slipped by without my even catching so much as a glimpse of him, years that carried him away from the police force to the Assistant Secretaryship of the Navy, to the Spanish-American War in Cuba as a Colonel of the Rough Riders, to the Vice-

Presidency of the United States and finally to be its Chief Executive.

Through all this time I was thrilled with the vital doings and tireless activities of this truly great man. When we finally met in 1912 he had lost his re-election, and had officially retired to private life, acting as assistant editor to Dr. Lyman Abbott on the *Outlook*.

On a Saturday afternoon, over the telephone came a message to me through his secretary, "Could Colonel Roosevelt attend the next day's, Sunday morning's, rehearsal at the Music School Settlement?"

Elation and joy swept over me, and the next morning I told the assembled orchestra of students that a great friend of theirs was coming to listen, that at a signal from the front door, which was to announce to me his arrival, they were to start playing the chorale, *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*. They were cautioned not to look around while playing and to play as they had never played before. The signal came while we were rehearsing something that kept us intent on our work. But the music of the chorale was quickly put in place by the hand of the players, and this ageless chant of devotion sounded out of those cheap fiddles with irresistible appeal.

In the middle of the floor I felt a presence, and as soon as we finished I called, "Children, now look and see who is here." Shouts and cheers and the rapping of the fiddles came from the players who now stood up, as did the applauding audience which always filled the hall. I stepped down to

meet our great visitor, who held out his hand and took mine in that firm grip of his, while he said, "Tell me, are these youngsters to become professional musicians?"

"When they do, Colonel," I answered, "I shall consider it a mark of failure in my purpose, for we give ourselves to them through the sheer love of the best that there is in music without professional consideration, and we can only hope they will receive this gift in that spirit."

"Then," said he, "I am with you."

With him came his friend, Dr. John Finley, at that time President of the College of the City of New York, who after the rehearsal asked me to bring the orchestra to the college. A date was immediately made, and some weeks later, Colonel and Mrs. Roosevelt sat in the front row of the tightly packed auditorium. The opening number was, by the Colonel's special request, the chorale which he had heard in East Third Street, but this time blending with the great organ. At his side sat Clara and our two children. Shortly afterward he held you Marya, then about seven, on his lap. Little imp that you were, you told me afterwards that during that time you had fingered the ex-President's watch chain and then slyly felt around his chest for the bullet you knew was imbedded there! Apparently you had remembered our grave concern over the attempted assassination of the man whose name was a household word among us.

FORTY-SEVEN

SONATAS IN LONDON: I RESIGN FROM THE SETTLEMENT

I BEGAN to realize, rather reluctantly, that the work of the school would overshadow a purpose which I held almost as dearly as life itself, my artistic progress. It was to that purpose I was committed, realizing at the same time that the school, in justice to its probable development, would need all of my time and strength. Loath to leave a glorious adventure just when it seemed so fruitful, I nevertheless felt that the time would soon come when I must tear myself away from these hundreds of young souls whom I held in such real affection. This decision I postponed, a dread finality to be temporized with.

In April, 1913, cutting our season short in New York, we went to England, taking our children with us; and while we remained in London, Tante, Leopold and Ma Mie (as she called herself) were sent off to Seaford on the south coast. Through great good luck Clara and I were able to rent a studio and adjoining living rooms on Portchester Road —the attractive home of two London musicians then absent

from town. We lived there in quiet and peace during our preparation for the three recitals planned in Bechstein Hall, running down to Seaford on weekends. It was a queer experience while riding atop the buses to see occasionally a string of sandwich men carrying little billboards advertising David and Clara Mannes—which, I had to admit, no one noticed but us! We felt young enough to be childishly chagrined. The first concert (the recitals were spaced a week apart) was poorly attended, but after very enthusiastic reviews the audiences grew, and at the last concert we played to a fine house. Our reception was so encouraging that we thought seriously of a Continental tour for the following spring of 1914.

The next winter back in New York my work was with the music school, tours with Clara over an ever widening territory, private lessons at home, and, on several occasions, public speeches on the work in East Third Street. The nervous stuttering boy of fourteen had become a public speaker, an activity which he did not enjoy and which he honestly tried to avoid.

The summers of 1914 and 1915 were spent at Chatham on Cape Cod. There in June of our first summer in a delightful cottage on the pond, came the news of the scarcely believable first act of the appalling world tragedy. The corporate body of humanity had again harbored in its breast an increasing lust for power, the viper of insensate material greed, allowing it to poison and defile its latent godlike spirit. The body might recover, but the passion for faith and

hope and freedom was stifled brutally by cynicism and unbelief and the exploitation of helpless human beings.

. . . . .

In 1916, after fifteen years, I finally resigned as director of the Music School Settlement. And the following summer we spent in one of the two cottages of a large estate at Huntington, Long Island. My old friend William Faversham had rented one, and asked us to take the other; and so we lived in delightful and stimulating companionship. I had, however, the sad consciousness of exile from a long-loved land, a place where I had lived and been of use. That land was East Third Street with its thousands of children and their many devoted teachers. It was hard, very hard, to have left this other house of mine, but in the preceding two years I had been only too aware of the fact that progress had slowed down and finally come to a halt; and where progress was impossible it seemed unmoral for me to stay. I was repeating myself and therefore must seek new fields. This time the adventure was to be another music school, in which control should rest completely in Clara and myself.

FORTY-EIGHT

WE START OUR OWN SCHOOL

WHAT was the real incentive to create another musical institute? It surely did not spring from the desire to enter into competition with other schools, the best of them so heavily endowed that they could carry on even at a loss on student fees; schools where the pupils could study at far less expense than with private teachers, and with the means at hand to attract many talented pupils through scholarships. What had we to offer to offset these material advantages?

Several of these endowed institutions were doing most excellent work, not alone in the quality of teaching but in raising the standards of general musicianship which the private music teacher was unable, in most instances, to do. For every student, regardless of the degree of his or her talent, needed first of all a sense of musical craftsmanship to enable him to pursue his professional calling. And he needed the confidence born of a highly disciplined training in musical fundamentals.

It seems contradictory, considering the fact that Europe

possesses many fine institutions of honorable standing in which long, intensive periods of training are required of its students, that very few of the world's greatest artists attended or completed the full courses at these music schools. But it is mainly to their great credit that they raised the standard of musical instruction. We owe to them today the high quality of our magnificent orchestras and the general musical culture of fine ensemble players.

All of this appreciation was deep in our minds long before we started our school. It was not to be just another good school, nor just a better school—but a very different kind of school. It was to become a veritable center of musical activity; embracing under the same roof not only the intense development of the potential professional, but the efforts of those who wanted merely to enrich themselves through a better understanding or playing of music without the responsibilities of a career. A school directed solely towards education for a career runs the danger of becoming institutional, while a purely cultural school for the amateur runs the opposite risk of becoming lax in standards, bereft of the stimulus that only serious artistic qualities can give. We felt that in offering a very fine faculty of teachers, with a more liberal and human attitude to the individual needs of each student regardless of talent, we were presenting more specialized treatment for each student according to his musical ability and general temperament.

Being without funds, and with the public mind engrossed in the European struggle, it seemed the worst possible time

to set about laying a foundation for an institution that had neither building nor equipment. However, even then, with everything against us, we still had courage and the faith of generous believers in our work; and finally an underwriting for rent and equipment against deficits was given us, making it possible for us to rent a magnificent private home on East Seventieth Street. All these preparations were concluded during the winter of 1915–16. In October of the latter year the school opened its doors, with a faculty carefully chosen in all departments and a fairly complete installation, which was comparatively economical since the house was beautifully furnished and all of it was for our use according to the terms of the lease.

FORTY-NINE

RAMBLING THOUGHTS

At this point I feel an urge to pause for a moment and relieve myself of a few thoughts which have occupied my mind for many years, and which still form an integral part of my personal philosophy.

As I said before, I have not a trained mind. My gropings for the truth are undisciplined, unaided by any of the established processes of logic. And much of my mental rambling ends in blind alleys—or thin air! But still—there is a residue which I would like to set down for what it is worth: certain conclusions about life and living, about body and soul, which I think contain the germs of truth, and which have helped me—and sometimes others—to see a little more clearly through the surrounding confusion of existence. Anyway—here they are.

I believe in repose; repose of body and repose of mind. To achieve the first, one should train oneself early in life to relax, as a dog does, or a cat; to lie down every once in a while, if only for five minutes. As a matter of fact, I am a firm believer (and exponent) of the old Arab proverb: "It

is better to stand still than to walk, better to sit down than to stand, better to lie down than sit." I have also noticed that a great many of the men and women who manage to stay young throughout their lives are adept at this relaxation. It is tense people who age quickly; tense people who sicken quickly.

The same thing holds for the mind. After periods of concentration it should be given a complete rest—"put out of focus" for a while. This does two things: prevents irrelevant outside impressions from encroaching upon it; and allows certain thoughts and feelings to enter which cannot take hold when the mind is a ferment of activity. Without a certain amount of quiet contemplation, no one can arrive—mentally or spiritually—at anything worth while. One must stop looking and hearing outwards every so often and turn the gaze and the ear inward. Stupid, empty, vacuous people make such a constant noise and clatter inside their head that they are incapable of hearing the true inward voice—not to speak of the truth that lies outside of them and around them.

. . . . .

While I love to walk, I don't think exercise is essential to fitness. I have been wiry and tough all my life, with an absolute minimum of exercise. Instead, I *feel* myself fit all the time. I have worked on myself a great deal, making myself conscious of all the ordinary actions of living—bending, getting up from chairs, picking things up, walking upstairs, running for buses—and making them all count as direct ex-

pressions of the body. I try to perform these motions with the absolute minimum of effort and maximum of efficiency. I find that by controlling my breathing calmly I need not puff going upstairs; that by walking lightly, with a constant forward-going movement, I need not tire easily. Instead of pushing myself up from a chair by my arms—one of the first signs of age and physical laziness—I rise by the momentum of shifting balance. It is simple enough to do, it's merely something you have to think about now and then.

The main thing is not to relapse into heaviness or tenseness. There must be an inner lift to everything you do. This has little to do with weight: I know many fat people who handle themselves lightly. But the sagging shoulders, the sagging head, the heavy walk—all these are admissions of an inward heaviness that is—in turn—the admission of spiritual defeat.

. . . . .

As you can see by the foregoing, I believe the link between body and mind far closer than is generally considered. So many illnesses, I firmly believe, are the direct result of mental depression or spiritual perplexity. If you—any of you—try to trace back the cause of a certain attack of indigestion or a certain cold or a certain headache, nine chances out of ten you can link it up not only with bad food or bad liquor or a late night, but with some emotional upset, some mental fatigue, some spiritual dissatisfaction. All these states weaken the body's resistance and make it a prey to any germ and

any disturbance. I have found this to be invariably true in my own case—and I am surely not unique.

. . . . .

This is also a good moment, I feel, to pause and give an idea of what you seem like, purely externally, to the outside world. The essence of yourself is indeed in your story; but not apparent are all those little quirks and shadings of mind and body that, together with this essence, spell David Mannes to others. So, with your permission, I append the following thumbnail sketches.

I see you lying down—not from fatigue but from preference. You usually have a book in your hand. After lunch you are more than likely to fall asleep over it. I once looked at the detective story you were reading and saw that you had fallen asleep with your hand on a page whose final words were "Holding the knife high over her head he—."

You can, in fact, relax more completely than anyone I know. This makes you extremely restful to be with; except at times when immediate action is required.

You seem, also, beautifully oblivious of the demands of time. As a matter of fact, I think this very obliviousness of days, hours, weeks—arbitrary measurements, after all—is one reason why you remain young. I know that's why you dislike birthdays so: because they represent an artificial unit of measurement which is not your own, and has little bearing on your current mood or condition.

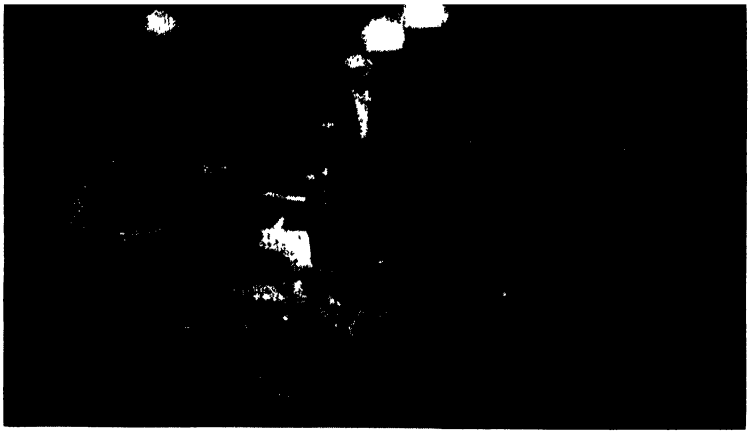
I see you very clearly at the dining table. You are in-

capable of sitting squarely in your chair and facing the table. Your legs are crossed over to one side and your body is tangential to the table—"on the bias," as Mother says.

The rest of the family talks so much and so loudly that you relapse into silence most of the while, emerging now and then to remark wistfully, "I never get a chance to say a word in this family"; or to make some profound observation which has no bearing on the current conversation. We will all be talking, for instance, about Fred Astaire's dancing, and you will suddenly say "I think fat people have fat minds." Having said this you submerge again.

Examples of your absent-mindedness would fill a book. They range from your well-known habit of giving the taxi-driver the address you are leaving instead of the address you are going to, to helping yourself so freely at the dinner table (you pile on food in a daze) that nothing is left on the dish for anxious guests. At these times Mother makes agonized facial expressions at you which you never see.

But the peak of your absent-mindedness, as I remember it, was when you had put on full dress for some reception and we found you, in the nick of time, waiting for the elevator with your old striped wrapper draped negligently over your full dress pants and your top hat on your head.



At the David Mannes Free Concerts, Metropolitan Museum of Art (EDWIN ROSSKAM)

FIFTY

PABLO CASALS: ERNEST BLOCH

In one of the first recitals given in this country by Pablo Casals, which took place at Mendelssohn Hall, Clara played with him the *A major sonata* of Beethoven, and from that occasion began our friendship with Casals. He came often to the house, bringing his 'cello, playing much chamber music with us. Those evenings will always remain unforgettable for us, as well as for our two children.

Each return to America brought Casals to our house, and the utterance of the 'cello under his fingers still sounds in our ears, a standard that floats immeasurably high above our heads but not above our hearts and understanding.

During the first year of the school's existence Casals proposed a program to be given there of the two Brahms sextettes for strings, offering to take part himself. It was easy to get excellent players for such a performance with Pablo Casals as a colleague. Leopold, then sixteen, sat apart listening to all the rehearsals. There were at least six, which took place in the evenings and Sundays. Two weeks after

the concert we heard Leopold playing at the piano many parts of both sextettes with perfect harmonic accuracy and fidelity of phrasing. He had never seen the score; he simply remembered. Later, not long after, he enlarged on these excerpts until it seemed he had committed both sextettes to memory. We knew then, against our fears, that Leopold's musical enthusiasm had not waned: on the contrary, it had retired within and grown stronger.

. . . . .

The season 1916–17 proved beyond a doubt that our school was needed. Its enrollment of students, mostly children from private schools, was better than we had anticipated, and made it possible for us to call on only one-half of the underwriting fund allotted for that year. We were encouraged to enlarge our plans for the following season to attract also the more adult and serious student in the study of composition.

We offered the position as head of the theory department to Ernest Bloch. He had arrived from Europe a season before to conduct the performances of a well-known classical dancer whose American tour was short-lived and unsuccessful. Bloch returned to Geneva, where our offer reached him. He accepted and reached New York before the opening of the school's second year. His lectures were enthusiastically attended, so much so that within a few months a concert was planned and sponsored by a group of his new friends at Carnegie Hall, creating great interest and enthusiasm. A

man of brilliant and dynamic qualities, he was, we soon found, born to create and not to observe a teacher's schedule and a routine scholastic timetable. His appeal must naturally be made to great metropolitan audiences, not constructively in the small classroom nor to the isolated pupil over a long period. This does not mean that as a teacher he was not illuminating and fervid over a brief period, nor that his personality did not leave an indelible impression on those fortunate enough to come in contact with him. His was a distinct service to the school which we cannot forget.

FIFTY-ONE

THE MUSEUM CONCERTS—TWENTY YEARS OF CONDUCTING

FOR MANY years I had dreamed of a perfect place to make music in—orchestral music. The atmosphere of the concert hall had always seemed to lack something. It made people constrained or, what was worse, self-conscious. Many of them came not to hear music so much as to be seen hearing music. And there was a formality, a rigidity about the whole thing that, to my mind, ill-suited the spirit of the music played.

I dreamed of a place where people could come and listen to fine music without this constraint: where they could arrive when they chose and leave when they chose, and where, the tickets costing nothing, there would be no economic or social barrier to their coming.

One day I was asked to conduct an orchestra at a reception for the Italian Ambassador, given at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The orchestra played up on the north balcony of the huge entrance hall.

This was the place, I thought to myself, profoundly

excited. Here were the space, the acoustics, the freedom—and, best of all, the most beautiful objects in the world around one.

And one morning came the first step to the crystallization of this vision. The night before I had conducted an orchestra at a museum reception given by its president, Mr. Morgan, and the board of trustees, to the members of the Society of the Metropolitan Museum and their friends. In a telephone communication from Mr. Edward Robinson, the director, I was told that Mr. Edward Harkness, a trustee, had just been in to see him and offered to defray the expenses of the orchestra for six concerts during the winter season to be given in the evening—free admission to all who cared to come. One condition was that I was to conduct. To say that I was excited and thrilled is putting my reaction to that message but mildly. Another dream had mysteriously come true.

I went about in a high state of elation—not because of another personal acquisition among other wonderful things that had come to pass in my life, but with a feeling of humble acceptance of a call to duty that had all the elements of beauty.

A few days later a letter from Mr. Robinson came saying that at a meeting of the board of trustees it was decided that since the museum bore the immense responsibility to posterity for the safeguarding of priceless treasures, it could not take the responsibility of subjecting the exhibits to the danger of harm or destruction in the jostling of masses of

people congregated in large numbers in only one part of the building. The generous offer of Mr. Harkness was therefore most regretfully declined.

It is unnecessary to describe my disappointment. After a few days of a calmer acceptance of what I thought a tragedy, I approached Mr. de Forest, then vice-president of the museum, asking him, since he had been in favor of such concerts, to sponsor two under the following conditions: no public advertisement, no police, and no extra guards, the concerts without aid of soloists to be given on Saturday nights and the programs handed to the audience upon entering without payment. In fact, everything was to be free. The United States had already sent her soldiers abroad in fighting units mainly through the port of New York and a great many soldiers and sailors found themselves on the streets of the city, and it was for them primarily that the concerts were planned.

This time the trustees approved, the dates were set for the concerts and the orchestra engaged. By word of mouth and small notices displayed in the galleries, a very small part of the public was informed. The first night there were only 781 present; the following week the attendance doubled. Nothing was harmed, the audience behaved in an orderly manner, interested obviously and solely in good music heard in an environment of great art. On February 19, 1918, Mr. Rockefeller, Jr. in a letter said that he and Mrs. Rockefeller had attended one of the promenade concerts at the museum and that they were "pleased beyond expression with what we saw and heard. The music was delightful and was heard to

the best advantage. The character of the audience was most interesting, and their appreciation of the concert and the surroundings was marked. The informal, friendly spirit which prevailed, hundreds of people sitting on the floor, many of them knitting, all quiet and properly respectful, . . . mingling together in a friendly, natural way, made the occasion a unique and significant one. I think you have rendered a great service to the city in having gotten the Museum Trustees to try out this experiment, and earnestly hope these concerts may become a permanent institution of the city."

After the concert on the following Saturday I was talking to an old lady who spoke to me with enthusiasm of her pleasure, telling me that for years, since her arrival in this country, she had heard no good music owing to the lack of means to pay for seats even in the gallery at Carnegie Hall, and saying that in Europe in her earlier days she had heard and loved symphonic music. Since then she had missed the performances of the works of the great masters. "Oh," she said, "this evening is more beautiful than I even dreamt of. The statues and pictures, and the music all together, and—and"; then I became conscious of someone standing close by as if to speak to me. Turning I saw Mr. Rockefeller, Jr., accompanied by his daughter, both carrying folded camp chairs. He said, "Don't let me interrupt. I can wait." Bidding goodnight to my old lady friend, I turned to Mr. Rockefeller, who said, "How much do the concerts cost?" I answered, giving him the exact sum of the expense of each concert including one rehearsal. "I will send," he said, "a check to you to pay for a

series of four concerts, such as these two you have given, on one condition: that the donor shall remain anonymous."

I told Mr. Robinson, the director of the museum, of this stroke of good fortune. "Who is your wonderful friend?" he asked. "I am sorry," I answered, "but I have promised not to tell."

The next morning Mr. Robinson telephoned and begged me to try to secure the permission to say who the generous giver was. After a pleading interview with Mr. Rockefeller in which I repeated the words of Mr. Robinson that it would encourage other generous-minded people to support additional concerts through the use of Mr. Rockefeller's name, coupled with the knowledge of his act of altruism, I won his consent. The trustees at a meeting accepted this offer, and Mr. Rockefeller's concerts were set to take place in January on four successive Saturday nights at eight o'clock.

On the first of these, there had been placed in various parts of the great hall about 1,500 seats. At six o'clock these were occupied. The remainder of the audience found no other vantage point for listening than to stand up during the entire two hours of the program.

Now the press carried small reading notices of the concert with the result that more listeners were attracted to each concert. The museum authorities provided rush seats for those who preferred sitting on the floors to standing. The turnstile indications marked off an attendance of nearly five thousand, the rapidly increasing audience representing seemingly all the nations of the earth, comporting itself with quiet

demeanor, and listening with keen attention to the music. Nevertheless, this rapid increase in numbers created some apprehension on the part of at least one of the officers of the museum who felt that it might be necessary to close the doors when five thousand people had passed through the gates.

Another series was planned for March, and voluntary donations for this purpose were easily found among the museum trustees. It was thought best to omit February as a continuation of the January series in order to disperse this huge and fast-growing audience, and to begin over again a month later. Three years later, I received the following:

26 Broadway
New York

February 18, 1921

Dear Mr. Mannes:

I greatly appreciate your letter of February 9th with reference to the January series of orchestral concerts at the Metropolitan Museum. You greatly overestimate the part which I played in developing this unique and interesting musical center. My impression is that it was you who first suggested trying these concerts for the soldiers during the war. I attended one of them when the general public was first admitted, and was so impressed with the character of the audience and its diversity both in nationality and social status that I felt it a privilege to co-operate with those who were back of the movement in providing for more concerts. Each series has only strengthened my belief in the value of the enterprise, and I have been happy to have a part in it. The whole thing is so in line with your own spirit and point of view that I cannot but attribute the success of the undertaking in no small degree to

your leadership and what you put into the program of yourself and your own ideals.

Again my thanks for your letter.

Very cordially,

(Signed) John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

Mr. David Mannes
157 East 74th Street
New York, N.Y.

As I write, twenty consecutive years of these eight concerts have been given, and nothing has happened to mar the serene progress of these gatherings in search of beauty. Violence of any kind has not occurred, none of the exhibits has been injured, and gentle behavior of both audience and attendants has been the general spirit of these evenings.

Not alone, on these occasions, is the museum open for a music-loving public, but the gates remain open for three-quarters of an hour after the concerts in order that the exhibits may be viewed by the great numbers of people whose imagination has been made to function with added appreciation through music. The audiences now number anywhere from eight to over fifteen thousand.

There are about 2,200 seats and people begin to occupy them from four o'clock on. The stairway to the upper galleries, with just a narrow lane left for passage, is crowded with listeners who cannot see the musicians. In fact, from these concerts is eliminated the quality of visual pleasure which usually accompanies listening to an orchestra, for the orchestra seated on the stone parapet of the north gallery is invisible to all, and only part of the conductor is seen. (This

fact alone is enough to keep the society "music-lovers" away. So much of their "love" resides in the figure or gesticulations of their favorite conductor!) The programs have changed from the character of promenade concerts to music of the highest quality, and every program contains a standard symphony.

Now museums throughout the country have their regular concerts, but as all of them lack the great space of the central hall, they are limited to programs enlisting small groups of performers, such as quartets and organ recitals. London's great museum has, I believe, contented itself with the giving of such chamber music concerts.

In the development of these concerts I remember with great gratitude those who have helped to make such a history possible. Mr. Edward Robinson, director of the museum, who from the beginning was more than sympathetic to the plan; Mr. Rockefeller, not alone for his financial support but for his words of encouragement and understanding vision as to the need of providing the general public with an opportunity of this kind; Clarence H. Mackay, who as the result of a visit to one of the concerts some years ago, bore the expense of the March series and the increasing expense with Mr. Rockefeller of a larger orchestra and extra rehearsals. In closing this chapter—one of the most absorbing adventures of my life—I think it will be interesting to note that in twenty years of one hundred and sixty concerts, the people who have come through storm and stress on many a winter's Saturday night to the Metropolitan Museum number over a

million. No soloists, no sensational appeals have been the lure to attract this vast army of peace to listen. The sensation was neither soloist, orchestra nor conductor. The sensation of this whole experience has been the touching response of the multitude.

Touching is the word. Those thousands are animated by one thing only—love of music. There are no social considerations, no class distinctions, no money barriers. There is no room for pride, for exhibitionism, for factionism. I doubt if ever the democratic spirit were visible in a purer state.

These people are touching because they come there tired, being poor and having worked all day in sweatshop or factory or store or subway. And they stand for two hours carrying their coats, their white faces held to one side, their feet apart, their eyes vague. Tired women slump on the floor, leaning their heads against the granite claws of some gigantic sphinx. Very often children fall asleep on their laps, thin legs sprawling. Lovers find a niche between glass cases of Korean pottery, head against shoulder, hand in hand, listening.

Even the sculpture seems to be listening. Greek heads come alive, leaning towards the source of sound, their beautiful sullen mouths half-open. Torsos move forwards, warriors march silently, the dancers in friezes step in timeless motion.

And the faces—the faces of these listening thousands would be the inexhaustible delight of anthropologist as well

as poet. One has the high cheek-bones of the Mongol, another the Slavic bullet head, another the almond eyes of Asia Minor. Predominating, indeed, are the Russian and Polish Jews, but there is no race on earth that is not represented at the museum; and no age from six to ninety.

FIFTY-TWO

WE HOUSE OUR SCHOOL

The second year of the school passed. Our student body increased in numbers so that at the end of that school year it was possible to ask only half of the smaller amount of underwriting allotted in the plan of diminishing financial backing for each of the three years. At the end of the third year this favorable condition was repeated. The school needed only approximately one-half of the backing secured to safeguard the greatest artistic and financial responsibility of our lives.

We were mightily discouraged, however, when it appeared that we must lose the possibility of leasing the beautiful building for another three years, or even for another season, unless we would buy outright land, building and its furnishings. What to do? We were quite frantic. We poor musicians without possessions of any kind saw the possibility of losing our school unless we could raise $175,000!

Then, providentially, there came help from an unexpected quarter. A near neighbor of ours, James Gamble Rogers, the distinguished architect whose daughter was a student of the

school, and to whom, in passing, I related our critical situation, told us to try to sell bonds among our friends for the purpose of buying the building. This seemed impossible, more than impossible, for the first Armistice Day had only passed, and what chance would an investment in favor of a music school have when money was needed everywhere to repair the aftermath of four years of destruction? Nevertheless, we searched in all directions for a house adaptable to the school's requirements, and while there were many empty ones we were disheartened to find none that answered our purpose.

Again our architect friend, Mr. Rogers, came to the rescue with another plan, briefly this: "I know of three old-fashioned, brownstone high-stoop houses on Seventy-fourth Street which you could buy for $65,000 cash. An added $35,000 or so will serve to remodel these houses and to build a hall in the rear over the backyards, fifty feet long, with a stage and the space for an adequate pipe-organ. What sort of a building do you want?" We told him the absolutely necessary requirements.

"And now the façade." The answer to that was already in our minds, for Clara and I had agreed upon, roughly speaking, a combination of the old Colony Club and an ancient Boston private dwelling; something typically American and simple without the slightest trace in outline of the average educational type of architecture—those heavy, formal buildings usually associated with educational purposes.

A week or two later Mr. Rogers sent us a sketch of the

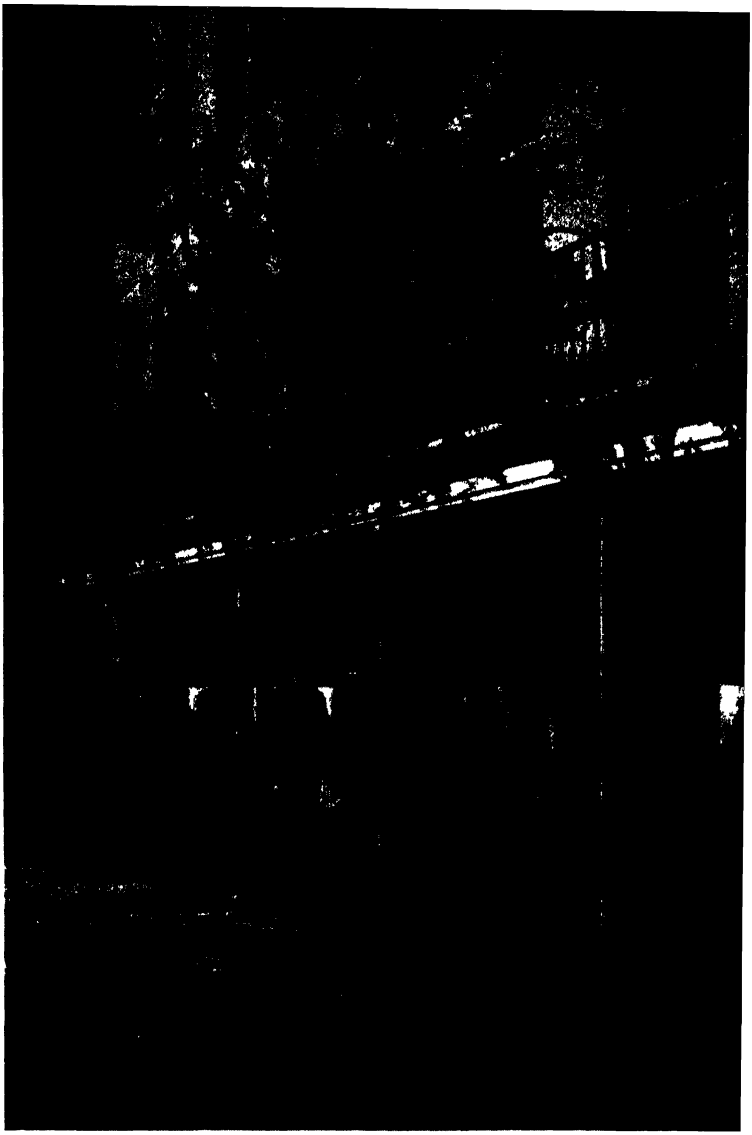
building as it is today, and sometime later the complete plans of interior arrangement.

The necessary capital was finally raised by loyal friends, and the buildings bought outright for cash. Off we went for a much-needed summer vacation, happy in the assurance that our new school would open its doors in the first week of October.

We got back to New York in early September, expecting to find a building needing a few finishing touches. Instead we found a gutted and wrecked pile of masonry, half-demolished stoops, and a mutilated façade. Mr. Rogers had spared us the long tale of strikes and union demands that had caused this.

With the school's scheduled opening some five weeks off, with no office, no telephone, the period for student registration imminent, our despair was truly an exact counterpart of the crazy desolation and chaos of rubble and mortar and cement over which I stumbled. What to do? We must have an office and a telephone. A neighbor next door provided the former, and Mr. Vail and Mr. Kingsbury, president and vice-president of the New York Telephone Company—and our good friends—saw to it personally that the telephone was placed in that makeshift basement office.

Our two secretaries—for now our devoted Marian Claire Smith had an able assistant in Alfrida Kramer—were unfailing in all they did to help. Our staff of teachers were asked to be ready to teach our pupils in their homes; and where that was not feasible, rooms in the neighborhood were rented



The David Mannes Music School

by the week for that purpose. We saw that at the earliest we could not use the new building for two months.

The final hurdle, formidable and menacing, was an overcharge of construction of $17,000. A few months later a check for $20,000 was given us by the same friend who had subscribed to half of the amount of certificates, and in her selfless bounty preferred to remain anonymous. She saved many a day of despair and hopelessness for us.

With a part of her donation a small library of music was assembled and placed in a room devoted to the purpose on the second floor. Another friend gave a beautiful Skinner organ in memory of her mother. We now went full steam ahead with a larger student body taking lessons in scattered areas all over the city, controlled from the impromptu office functioning feverishly in that basement room next door. The day came finally, in November, when the installation of pianos began, and the furnishings necessary for comfort and attractiveness were put in place. And the David Mannes Music School opened its doors.

A dedicatory program was held at the school on February 7, 1920, at which Lyman Abbott and Walter Damrosch made addresses. Yvette Guilbert, who had held courses in the school, sang old French songs, and Clara and I opened the program playing an adagio by Beethoven.

FIFTY-THREE

ROSARIO SCALERO AND DR. HANS WEISSE: THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION

The first season was a great success with every reason for encouragement. The school had not alone carried itself financially but gave us the courage to assume for the following season even greater risks. Clara and I went on with our recital tours to provide income for the family living, for our combined salaries were kept at a modest figure to insure the financial security of the school and the dedication of a possible surplus of its earnings to its artistic development.

Since an influx of older and professionally-minded students came to us, we saw the necessity of engaging a distinguished successor to Ernest Bloch. At the enthusiastic recommendation of Ugo Ara, viola player of the Flonzaley Quartet, Rosario Scalero of Rome was invited to come over to teach the art of strict counterpoint. He remained with us for six years, building up a fine class of serious students of young men and a few young women. In this class Leopold

was a hard-working student, spending the summer months with his teacher in the mountains of the valley of Aosta in northern Italy. He among other students through Scalero's demanding guidance acquired a technique through strict counterpoint that will surely hold together any edifice built on the indestructible foundation of Palestrina, the master.

After such years of invaluable service, Scalero had accepted the offer of the Curtis School of Music in Philadelphia at four times the salary which we were able to pay. We were happy that we were the instrument, through such a teacher, of bringing to our country an exponent of the idea that to go forward one had to go back to principles antedating the universal Bach. His only possible successor to continue the class of composition would have been one of his students, and was, in our minds and that of his fellow-students, Leopold. What deterred us from choosing him at once were the possible objections to his age—he was now twenty-seven—and the fact that he was our son. He felt these objections perhaps more than we, but since no alternative appeared in sight it was finally decided that he should step into his teacher's shoes, provided that those of his students who wished to continue under Scalero should go to Philadelphia for that purpose. Later, when Leopold left to go on with his color photography at Eastman's in Rochester, we had again to seek a successor for the teaching of composition at our school, and we were most fortunate in securing the accomplished Dr. Hans Weisse of Vienna. Dr. Weisse has within a few years made a distinguished place for himself among the se-

rious students of composition as well as among outstanding musicians of the country. Surely if the school had no other claims to favor, it has had three really important influences in its faculty history—Bloch, Scalero and Weisse.

FIFTY-FOUR

ARTISTS AND THE SCHOOL: CORTOT: SCHNABEL

ALFRED CORTOT, the French pianist, had appeared in New York; and so enthusiastic were we about his beautiful playing that we engaged him to give a recital at the school for students and friends, admission through invitation. Following the indelible impression he made as a great artist, we arranged for the following season that Cortot would hold classes composed of the advanced players, students of the school, and listeners from the general public. This was followed, at M. Cortot's suggestion, by the engagement of his assistant to form a class of possible candidates for scholarships, whom M. Cortot on occasional visits would be able to hear and advise. These scholarships were to be gained through competitive examination and decisions made by a board of judges of which the school furnished two, Clara and myself. The successful competitors were to be given the opportunity, during the summer months, to work in Paris with the assistant, Mlle. Bert, to have personal lessons with M. Cortot, and living expenses paid.

The first summer six were chosen. The cost of these scholarships was borne by a friend of M. Cortot. While the result of this connection was worth while, we soon saw that the feasibility of permanence was highly questionable from several points of view, the chief of which we thought most serious to the life of the piano department of the school: only pupils of Mlle. Bert could compete for these scholarships. This was unfair to the other teachers, a number of whom were as effective in their work as Mlle. Bert, and who found their best players leaving them to work for the Paris scholarships which were obtainable only through having worked with M. Cortot's assistant. For this reason and others quite as important this connection after two winters in New York and two summers in Paris was abandoned.

We were the first among the thoroughly organized music schools of the country to introduce the study of solfège, under Mlle. Anne Marie Soffray—an obviously much-needed study for the serious music student. And under the influence of her supervision, much of the French dryness of method was removed.

. . . . .

Among the distinguished artists playing at the school were Artur Schnabel, Gieseking, Mme. Landowska (specializing in recitals on the harpsichord), Jacques Thibaud, and the Societé des Instruments Anciens. During Schnabel's first visit to New York he came to dine with us at our family table. Also present was Pablo Casals, who as usual on his

visits to us brought his 'cello, hoping to make some music. Casals and Schnabel, while they knew much of each other, had never met. Over the coffee, Casals said, "Why not the Brahms quartets?" "No viola player present." "Can't you get one?" "I'll try," said I, and I got up, and telephoned Louis Svecenski of the lately disbanded Kneisel Quartet. He arrived within the half-hour. Then followed a magnificent performance of both quartets, after which Casals went over and embraced Schnabel most warmly, kissing him on both cheeks. Clara, Tante and the children had listened completely entranced and felt that they had lived through a memorable experience.

I have forgotten among our wonderful evenings of music at home those spent three or four years previously with Willem Willeke rehearsing trios in preparation for programs to be given in Montclair under the auspices of a group of people devoted to chamber music, called the Mannes Musical Society. This course of concerts was devoted primarily to recitals given in private homes in Montclair by my quartet. When the quartet went out of existence the programs were made up of sonatas and trios.

Not only did our association with Willeke bring us the very welcome opportunity of playing trio literature, but it brought us the warmest possible friendship with himself and his charming first wife, the daughter of Franz Kneisel—a friendship interrupted only by her tragic and untimely death.

FIFTY-FIVE

WE FACE COMPETITION

THE School had grown, from small beginnings, to an enrollment of approximately four hundred students with a faculty of forty-eight teachers.

An ominous sign was the lengthening of the hours of attendance at private day schools. Up to now they had dismissed their pupils for the day between the hours of one and three, allowing the students plenty of spare time for the development of their young private lives (for even children should be permitted that privilege). But the private school sessions were now to end between four and five. Gone was the opportunity for unrestricted indulgence in furthering the special aptitude of the young mind to study drawing, music and allied interests outside the field of regular educational supervision. It was an advantageous plan from the point of view of a mother who wished for her own freedom from care for the entire length of daylight hours. But for others it meant lost opportunity to give the child a development not standardized by mass application and the routine of group instruction. The public school was assuredly better,

for being released from school at three o'clock there was time and space in the world for the roaming spirit of the young to go into the green pastures of discoveries.

Through the universal use of the phonograph the great majority of children became apt and precocious listeners. What little urge there was to learn to make music for themselves was easily discouraged by the daily association with an inexhaustible supply of musical entertainment that required no preparation or work and which flowed freely by placing a record on the ingenious machine.

With a few turns at the crank, eating, school work, reading, bathing and dressing could have "incidental music." This thoroughly eliminated the element of thought, not to mention the aristocratic sense of discrimination.

For the growing mind it was as enervating for the young as the continual use of the automobile was deadening to physical initiative. For older people, those house-ridden through loss of health, for those in enforced exile from the city and its advantages it was indeed a priceless boon; as it is in the means of recording for future generations the vocal as well as instrumental sound of the great masters that have passed beyond living memories.

As a source of spiritual enervation radio, too, has been guilty, in its earlier stages especially. Humanity's curiosity soon becomes diverted by a new and marvelous toy, and not fully realizing its important gift, turns it into a means of vacuous entertainment, brings it only too often down to the level of sordid exploitation—exploitation of talent as well as

of the public. There is everything to be said for the discriminating use of such a miraculous power, for bringing us words from the inaccessible great—words that deeply concern us all—and music from invisible genius, for saving human life, for diverting the shut-in. For such things we cannot be grateful enough. Never in humanity's history has the horn of plenty been poured into its lap just for the taking, never has such unlimited power of peace and happiness been at hand. But, so often, with what result? The frustration through misuse of a material power that might have had its great spiritual counterpart.

FIFTY-SIX

CREDO

The attention and time demanded from both of us made it necessary to cut down many of our public performances; and as the years progressed, they were entirely given up, to the real disappointment, we were told, of our friends. We appeared, however, in rare intervals at recitals in the school auditorium for the benefit of a teacher in distress or to help raise funds for the scholarship fund. The main interests of our work lay in the school, in my direction of the Metropolitan Museum concerts, and in a sympathetic devotion to the college for colored people, Fisk University of Nashville, of which I had been elected trustee.

Clara was to find the fulfillment of her musical life, of her great talents and capacities of mind and heart, in directing the growing school. Without her this important crux of our lives would have been impossible. It needed her loyal adherence to the highest standards of the art and spirit of music, and her clear judgment in the consideration of necessary details, to give unified expression to our combined

vision. Alone neither of us could accomplish our destined work. What I lack in clarity and courage and decisiveness she provides. And I, perhaps, contribute a certain philosophy and a certain phantasy—which sometimes appears to be irrational if not downright mad—without which no vision can be sustained.

If you were to ask me what things life has so far taught me I would say, among others, these:

I believe in the desperate need of a star, no matter how dim, to fasten one's searching and often despairing eyes upon. The choice of occupation is a secondary matter. What counts, fundamentally, is the constant search for the potential divinity in mankind; not in the herd, but in the single human.

I believe that the instinct of the heart should precede the judgment of the mind. The latter should serve the former and draw its power from it.

I believe that in seemingly insuperable obstacles lie the hidden doors to unexpected opportunity.

I believe that any calling is merely an instrument towards serving others; for in doing so one serves oneself.

I have never considered the practice of music as a means towards the self-expression of the individual performer. There is today a fetish of self-expression. Why not call it simply "ego"? Anything an artist does is of necessity bound to express himself; that is not an end in itself. The end is to express the highest creative spirit, using oneself merely as the medium of transmission. I have always considered

music as an exercise in devotion, or as a sacred region penetrable only by love and humility.

Above all—at least to me—music is the only perfect universal language. This is a platitude only because it happens, like other platitudes, to be based on incontrovertible truth. The only times when I have witnessed a state approaching the brotherhood of man have been moments of music, when hundreds of hearts beat to the same rhythm and lifted to the same phrase, and when all hate, all envy, all greed were washed away by the nobility of sound. Words are so often the agents of destruction; music—good music—can only build. And to learn the language of music—or at least to respond to it—one needs only an ear and a heart. It is only the deaf or the spiritually atrophied who do not somehow feel themselves exalted and purified in the presence of great music.

There are other ways beside music of trying to bind mankind in a common fight against the overwhelming forces of materialism and greed, of intolerance and rapacity, but they all have this in common with music: that they are based on creation and not on destruction. That is why I mistrust such drastic means of changing the world and the spirit of man as revolution. Any gain through violence is bound to prove transitory. For revolution is admitted to be, in the main, based on initial destruction: on a clearing of the ground, a razing of all things that were built through the generations. And the loss of this precious human residue is seldom compensated by the new structure that replaces it.

The more I know of people the less fit I feel to judge them. And the more I know of myself the better I understand the doubts and fears that encompass them. It is only natural to dislike certain traits and qualities in people, but one should think twice before condemning them. It is usually people without imagination for the sufferings of others who sit in judgment upon them; people who have never known the cleansing agony of doubt. That doesn't mean that one should never be sure of oneself; rather that one should never be satisfied with oneself. When that happens, the spirit closes up and becomes sterile. There is no end to the development of the soul—and to the wonders of living.

As to the future—I suppose to many "future" is a strange word for a man over seventy to use—I face it with all the excitement and hope and ambition of a young man, but with much more faith and much more strength than the young David Mannes possessed. I feel that I think more clearly, act more directly, conduct with surer artistry, and even play the violin far better than I ever did before. And I know that I can still be of use. Armed with this knowledge I look ahead—eagerly.

Books That Live

The Norton imprint on a book means that in the publisher's estimation it is a book not for a single season but for the years.

W • W • NORTON & CO • INC.
70 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

127 490

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY